A

TALE OF THE TIMES.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF A GOSSIP'S STORY.

DEDICATED BY PERMISSION TO MRS. CARTER.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

While Hope pictures to us a flattering scene of future bliss, let us deny its pencil those colours which are too bright to be lasting.—When hearts deserving happiness would unite their fortune, Virtue would crown them with an unfading garland of modest, hurtless flowers; but ill-judging passion will force the gaudier rose into the wreath, whose thorn offends them when its leaves are dropt.

SHERIDAN'S *Rivals*.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

Some recent publications may, perhaps, make it neceſſary for the Author of the ſubſequent Work, in order to evade the cenſure of plagiariſm, to ſtate, that ſhe could, if neceſſary, produce the teſtimony of ſeveral reſpectable witneſſes, to prove that the entire plot of the following ſtory, and nearly three parts of the writing, were finiſhed previouſly to the appearance of the play called "The Stranger" at Drury-lane Theatre; and that ſhe is not conſcious of having borrowed one idea from that much-admired performance.

She has ſeen two works advertiſed, which ſhe has been informed bear a reſemblance to her own plan: "Let-"ters from an Hindoo Rajah;" and "Wal-

“ Waldroff; or, the Dangers of Phi-
“ losophy.” As she has never met with either, she cannot tell how far her sentiments may be similar to theirs.

There is a class of writers to whom she owns herself under some obligations, as they not only suggested to her the portrait of her complete villain, but also furnished her with several specious passages, which she has appropriated, unaltered, to the character of Fitzosborne. She could specify the quotations, with the names of the authors; but perhaps their *liberality* will be better pleased with a general acknowledgment.



A

TALE OF THE TIMES.

CHAP. I.

> Forth ſteps the ſpruce philoſopher, and tells
> Of homogeneal and diſcordant ſprings
> And principles; of cauſes, how they work
> By neceſſary laws their ſure effects;
> Of action and reaction. He has found
> The ſource of the diſeaſe that nature feels,
> And bids the world take heart, and baniſh fear.
>
> COWPER.

MRS. PRUDENTIA HOMESPUN again begs leave to return thanks to the world for its very favourable reception of her lucubrations. She is now firmly convinced, that the clamours which are circulated againſt the injuſtice and bad taſte of the times, may be conſidered

either as the declamations of difappointed ambition, or the ebullitions of malevolent fpleen, foured by the fuccefs of fome happier rival. She conceives herfelf to be particularly fortunate in exifting at a period more favourable to mental exertions than thofe which have been commonly deemed the golden ages of literature. Contemplating from her eafy chair the vaft extent of modern difcoveries, not only in the fciences, but in morals and government, and extending her meditations from reflection on what her learned co-adjutors have done, to fpeculation on what they propofe doing, fhe is compelled to acknowledge, that the clofe of the eighteenth century claims diftinguifhed pre-eminence for thofe indubitable marks of genius, originality in enterprife, and boldnefs of invention, over the colder ages of Pericles, Auguftus, and the Medici.

Medici. Nay, ſhe will go ſo far as to affirm, that the labours of the "New Philoſophy" will be remembered by their effects, when the theories of all former ſchools ſhall be forgotten.

It muſt be very gratifying to a retired old woman, to conſider that her productions may ſail down this ſwelling ſtream of fame with thoſe of her immortal contemporaries. She confeſſes that her ideas differ in ſome reſpects from theirs; but as every one profeſſes the ſame end, namely, the improvement of the univerſe, ſhe rejoices that ſhe is permitted, by the liberality of the times, to diſſeminate her own peculiar ſentiments. If ſhe be of opinion, that Morality appeared to better advantage when ſhe was contented to be the handmaid of Piety, than ſince ſhe has ſet up for an independent character; if ſhe be convinced, that the abilities and attainments of man are [illegible]

this life so limited, that he will never be able to "wield these elements," to endow a machine with intellectual powers, or to array himself with a self-invested immortality; if she be persuaded, that the filial and conjugal ties are no remnants of feudal barbarism, but happy institutions, calculated to promote domestic peace; if she has been taught, that religion is more than sentiment, and female virtue something stronger than exterior decorum; if she shudder at the eloquence which extenuates impiety, terms seduction an amiable frailty, and gaming an elegant amusement condemned by the insane morality of the law: surely she may hope for that celebrity which a bold opposition to received opinions generally ensures. Nay, should she even prefer the Gothic ruff and pinner, as better adapted to British wives and mothers than the loose drapery of Grecian

Bacchanals,

Bacchanals, or the more offenſive appearance of uncivilized ſavages, though recommended by the ſanction of Pariſian enthuſiaſts, when, with more than Pagan infatuation or cannibal inſenſibility, they meet to commemorate in their feſtive dances—not the triumphs of their Gods, nor the death of their enemies—but the murder of their parents, their huſbands, and their children; may ſhe not plead a cloſe attention to the coſtume of manners, and reproach the ſenſual copyiſts of a Cleopatra or an Aſpaſia with want of energy, who adopt all the characteriſtics of the archetype, of which they exhibit a degrading model?

Her intention in reſuming the pen is to enforce her opinions by argument, and to illuſtrate them by example; and ſhe reveals thoſe intentions thus early, that the lover of the wonderful, and the admirer of the horrific, may not com-

plain of having been cheated into the perusal of a performance that has not only a plan for its conduct, but also a moral tendency in its design. Mrs. Prudentia intends to lead her readers through no other labyrinth than the wiles of systematic depravity, nor to present any object more soul-harrowing than a deceived and entangled, but ultimately penitent heart.

While she confesses that the groundwork of her story has a remote analogy to some well-known facts, she strongly reprobates the idea of personality. The incidents are all her own, and it is only in one portrait that she has attempted to sketch a likeness from nature. She assures the censorious, that, even in that portrait, she has so adjusted the drapery and varied the colours, that it will be impossible for the most curious eye to discover who sat for the outline.

Though

Though regardlefs whether the fafhionable inftructors of the day record her as one of their kindred fpirits, or condemn her for being a fervile admirer of prefcribed forms and reprobated reftrictions, there is a numerous clafs of readers, whofe favour Mrs. Prudentia is anxioufly folicitous to obtain—the truly liberal, and the fincerely good. With candour to forgive fmall faults, they unite difcernment to difcover good intentions, and courage to defend the caufe of principle againft the farcafms of wit, and the cool contempt of piqued infidelity. To fuch readers, and fuch critics, fhe fubmits the following pages; and as a proper reprefentative of the illuftrious order, fhe intreats

MRS. CARTER

to accept her public thanks for the invaluable honour of her approbation of

the Writer's former efforts, and her permiſſion to inſcribe theſe pages with her reſpected name. If the preſent attempt ſhould appear favourable to the cauſe of morality and religion, ſhe humbly hopes, that the lenity inſeparable from ſuperior talents will pardon thoſe errors in the compoſition, which an accurate taſte muſt diſcover and diſapprove.

CHAP. II.

The faireſt anceſtry on earth,
Without deſert, is poor;
And every deed of lofty worth
Is but a claim for more.
SIR ELDRED OF THE BOWER.

Some reaſons, which are not neceſſary to be developed in the following pages, made me wiſh to take a little excurſion from Danbury in the courſe of laſt autumn. A generous Public having ſupplied the means, I hired a one-horſe chaiſe, and taking with me my whole family, conſiſting of my maid Betty and my favourite old tabby cat, ſet out for Brighton. I there heard a narrative which made a very deep impreſſion upon my mind; and, as the communicativeneſs of my diſpoſition will not allow me to conceal any thing which I imagine ca-

 pable

pable of conveying inſtruction, or even innocent amuſement, to that worthy ſet of beings, whom, in common with my ſiſter authors, I term candid readers, I have determined to prefer publiſhing the Hiſtory of the Counteſs of Monteith to a particular deſcription of my own travels. To this reſolution I may, perhaps, have been influenced by a culpable degree of modeſty. The public, no doubt, are very anxious to know how many miles a day Betty and I journeyed; at what inns we ſtopped, and what we had for ſupper. Could not a florid deſcription beſtow ſome ſprigs of fame on the chalky cliffs of Dunſtable? Might not the horrors of Woburn ſands be rendered more gloomy by a convenient whirlwind, hurrying into the air the arid ſoil? Is there no old decayed manor houſe, where I could call forth the "ſheeted dead to ſqueak and gibber," or, ſuppoſing we

were

were benighted on Finchley-common, could either Rhætian or Carpathian Alps fix a more appropriate ſtation for the haunts of a banditti? Though in a former publication I have unwarily announced my age and order, Betty, for aught the world knows, may be young and beautiful; nay, ſhe may be an orphan foundling, the heireſs of ſome diſtinguiſhed family; and I may, if I chuſe, after a long ſeries of adventures, unite her in the hymeneal bond with ſome all-accompliſhed youth, who had previouſly reſcued us from the robbers after a moſt bloody engagement. I begin to ſuſpect that I have choſen the leſs promiſing, or rather the leſs lucrative plan; but I entreat my readers to believe, that it is not becauſe I want powers for the terrific and the romantic, that I continue to purſue the moral and the probable. Something muſt be allowed to my deſire

of ſupporting that character of firmneſs aſcribed to my ſiſterhood, and which, though it ſimply conſiſts in chuſing to have our own way, the wits are apt to call pertinacity. I will alſo candidly own, that, ſince the ſuperior ſtation in this walk is already occupied by real genius, I have too much prudence to enter into a competition, where I ſhall be ſure to meet with a defeat; and too much pride to enliſt among a herd of ſervile imitators, who miſtake confuſion for deſcription, and fancy that what is horribly impoſſible, muſt be intereſting and grand. But, as my days of dotage are not far diſtant, if lady Monteith ſhould be unfortunate in her appeal for attention, I and Betty may appear upon the ſcene; even my cat too may be introduced in an epiſode. I have ſeen a ſubject equally unpromiſing worked up to an aſtoniſhing effect, and really admired by readers who

who had been ſome years out of the nurſery :—But, inſtead of terrifying the world with a denunciation of what I may do, let me haſten to fulfil my preſent promiſe.

IT is now more than ten years ſince Powerſcourt Houſe exhibited a ſcene of feſtivity and hoſpitality unrivalled in modern times, and which might ſerve to recal to the mind of the ſpectator the ſplendid fêtes of Kenilworth, where the lady of the lake welcomed the approach of majeſty, and the cruel diſſolute earl of Leiceſter ſought to divert general attention from his vices by a captivating diſplay of elegance and amuſement. The motives of the venerable baronet who inhabited Powerſcourt were widely different from thoſe of the haughty favourite of Elizabeth. His wife was too inoffenſive to fear cenſure; his heart never panted for court-favour; and the praiſe

of

of magnificence or refined tafte prefented no attractions to his unobtrufive and benevolent mind. He called all the country together, and ftrove to make them very happy, becaufe he was very happy himfelf; and the occafion of this exuberant joy was the union of his only daughter and heirefs, Geraldine Powerfcourt, with James earl of Monteith, a young Nobleman who had juft attained complete majority, and acceded to all the fplendid titles and fortune of the houfe of Macdonald.

Befide all the beauty and fafhion of North Wales, thefe diftinguifhed nuptials were honoured by the prefence of two deities, generally fuppofed to be abfolutely inimical to each other. Cupid and Plutus, forgetting ancient enmity, agreed jointly to light the Hymeneal torch. It was impoffible to fuppofe a union contracted under a more perfect

coinci-

coincidence of harmonious equality. The families on both ſides might be ſaid to loſe themſelves in the clouds; for their claims to pre-eminence, advancing far beyond the limit of authentic hiſtory, ſoared into regions which no prudent antiquary would dare to explore. The lineal honours of theſe illuſtrious families reſted upon a ſurer baſis than mere oral tradition. Sir William Powerſcourt could point out the ſpot of ground where his Ordovician anceſtor harangued his vaſſals before he mounted his ſcythe-armed car, and led them to join the Britiſh forces aſſembled at Caradoc: and an aunt of lord Monteith's preſerved the beak of the galley, which conveyed Donald king of the Iſles from Illa, when he paid a viſit of ceremony to his contemporary Fergus, ſome hundred years prior to the invaſion of the Romans. It is true, that ſome incredulous critics, whom nothing

nothing can convince, doubted whether the feudal cuſtoms, with which Sir William embelliſhed his narrative, exiſted at that remote period; and I have heard a whiſper, that the venerable relic which lady Madelina ſo carefully preſerved was nothing more than the remains of a great gilded dragon, originally ſuſpended over a Chineſe temple belonging to her ladyſhip's *matarnal* great-grandfather, though ſo happily executed, that, like Hamlet's cloud, you might ſay it was equally like a "camel, or an ouſel, or a whale."

But though theſe veſtiges of remote ſuperiority might rather excite the doubts than fix the conviction of the obſerver of coſtume, the Macdonalds and Powerſcourts preferred indubitable claims to the honours of antiquity,—extenſive influence and ample poſſeſſions. It ſometimes happens, that cloſe attention to ad-

ventitious

ventitious or fantaſticappendages induces us to overlook inherent permanent qualities. Lady Madelina's zeal for the dignity of her family was ſo warmly exerciſed in the defence of old Donald's galley, that ſhe had no leiſure to advert to the fearleſs intrepidity and the generous liberality with which her anceſtors defended the rights of their clan, and ſuccoured their oppreſſed dependants during the period that the houſe of Stuart ſate upon the Scottiſh throne. "They ſhone the glory of the north" till after the reſtoration; but the reign of Charles the ſecond, ſo fatal to principle and morality, firſt contaminated the houſe of Monteith, and ſapped the foundations of its feudal greatneſs. In the voluptuous court of that diſſipated monarch, the then earl forgot the wild ſhores of Loch Lomond, and the "flowery borders of the ancient Forth;" and abandoning his

caſtle

caſtle to ruin, and his dependants to deſpair, glittered a faint ſatellite in the train of tinſel greatneſs. His extravagance and prodigality were in ſome degree repaired by the alliance of his ſucceſſor with the heireſs of a rich Blackwell-hall factor; but the archives of the family are rather ſilent upon that head, and lady Madelina could never relate a ſingle anecdote explanatory of the event of thoſe diſgraceful nuptials. Since that period, the Macdonalds had perſevered in the plan of leaving the family eſtate, clear from incumbrances, to the eldeſt ſon. The younger ſons either fell in the defence of their country, or ſtarved in ſome obſcure corner, while the daughters had only their high birth to add to the perſonal qualifications of merit and beauty, advantages not always ſufficient to attract the mercenary heart of man. With no other portion lady Madelina herſelf be-

ſtowed

flowed on the fortunate head of the houfe of Frazer, the ineftimable treafure of her hand. He was indeed far advanced into the vale of years, and his title was only fimple Sir Simon; but her ladyfhip preferred him to all the dukes, marquiffes, and earls, who, according to the indubitable teftimony of herfelf and her maid Peggy, had for more than twenty years unremittingly implored her compaffion.

The father of the young earl, whofe nuptials with the heirefs of Powerfcourt have been announced in the beginning of this chapter, fell a victim to the demon of modern honour, about the fame time that the pale orgies of diffipation had made a vifible inroad in his lady's health. The fhock at the dreadful circumftances of his exit haftened the cruel attacks of difeafe, and fhe expired a few months after her lord. The noble pair had ever found each other's fociety too

vapid

vapid to difpel the gloom of one domeftic evening; yet his lordfhip conceived himfelf obliged to refent the intrufion of a young officer, who entered her ladyfhip's box at the opera at a time when the earl was of her party. He fell at the firft fire, and the countefs found it impoffible to furvive him. The fcandalous chronicles of the age afferted, that the colonel's appearance was neither unexpected nor unwelcome to any but the earl, and that difappointment, and the neceffity of feclufion and œconomical retrenchment, barbed the mortal dart of woe in the bofom of the fair inconfolable. Till I am convinced that jealoufy is the only motive which can direct the attention of a hufband to his own wife, and that connubial forrow wants energy to break the fragile thread of female exiftence, I fhall adhere to my own reprefentation of this cataftrophe.

Lord

Lord Monteith, following the example of his progenitors, left his eſtate totally unincumbered to his only ſon James. His beautiful daughter Arabella found a protectreſs in the friendſhip of her aunt, lady Madelina, who adopted her as her own daughter, and publicly declared her reſolution, in caſe ſhe ſhould produce no heir to the houſe of Frazer, to bequeath to her all the ample poſſeſſions with which ſir Simon's tender gratitude had endowed his beloved bride. At the age of ſeventeen, after having experienced the adulation and the luxury of two London winters, the lovely Arabella ſet out for her aunt's caſtle ſituated in the wilds of Lochaber, where, by the indiſpoſition of ſir Simon, now reduced to a ſtate bordering upon ſecond childhood, ſhe had the melancholy proſpect of being perfectly immured.

Her

Her brother's plans were more eligible and agreeable. His guardians insisted that in his education he should pursue the routine usually adopted by young men of his elevated rank. He had been entered at one of our public schools, and thence removed to the University. To counteract a dangerous propensity to the fatal allurements of Newmarket, it was proposed immediately after his father's death, that he should make the tour of Europe. He returned when of age, assumed the fortunes of his family, and with them the representation of the ancient peerage of Scotland in the British Parliament, an honour which had been for some time enjoyed by his ancestors.

Since the forms of his election rendered necessary his presence at Holyrood House, he could not avoid paying a visit to the seat of his family. His

manners were popular, his countenance ſtrikingly prepoſſeſſing, and his perſon dignified, athletic, and graceful. The Highlanders recognized in the "bonny Lad" the true repreſentative of the houſe of Macdonald; and the ancient dependants, who, ſince their lairds had deſerted Monteith, vegetated on the ſpot which the attachments of their youth rendered eminently dear to them, led their young maſter the tour of his domain, and pointed out to him its local advantages. They endeavoured to direct his attention to the maſſy grandeur of his caſtle walls, the extenſive proſpect enjoyed from its turrets, and the faded magnificence of its mouldering furniture. They repeatedly aſſured him, that in his grandfather's time Monteith boaſted a diſtinguiſhed preference over the abode of any other Highland chieftain. The young Nobleman was not paſſionately attached

attached to ruins; the ſtormy winds, howling through the long galleries, diſturbed his repoſe, and he wiſhed for no nearer acquaintance with the genius of the tempeſt. He beſtowed with a liberal hand ſuch relief as would afford poverty a temporary aid; but, without exerting ſufficient patience to inveſtigate the cauſe of the calamity, or ſufficient courage to redreſs the evils which even a curſory glance diſcovered, he haſtened to Kinloch Caſtle, to pay his dutiful reſpects to lady Madelina.

Neither the manners nor the reſidence of her ladyſhip were calculated to remove the diſguſt with which "Scot and Scotland had inſpired him." The houſe was ſituated on a bare precipice, the foot of which was waſhed by the ſtormy ſea that ſeparated the main land from the Hebrides. When its amiable miſtreſs removed from the deſerted walls

of

of Monteith, ſhe carried with her all her "Houſehold Gods," I mean, the venerable inhabitants of the picture gallery, and the ſcreens, chairs, and tapeſtry hangings, with which the white-armed ſpinſters of Macdonald had ſucceſſively decorated their family-ſeat. Sir Simon, doubtleſs, felt ſincere exultation at this valuable acquiſition; he only ſtipulated that the remains of his progenitors ſhould not yield their places to the new comers. A coalition was therefore formed, and every wall and apartment in the caſtle was crowded with multiplied garniture. Screen concealed ſcreen, chair ſupported chair; a ſtripe of Jacob meeting Eſau repaired the diſaſtrous rents too viſible in the taking of Troy, and puzzled the Ciceroni who attempted to unravel the confuſed hiſtory; while Frazers and Macdonalds, placed in full oppoſition,

 frowned

frowned fierce defiance upon each other, regardlefs of the bond which now united the once rival families, and ungrateful to lady Madelina's eloquence, who gratuitoufly performed the part of eulogift to them all.

On the third day after her nephew's arrival, when fhe had explained the family exploits to the eleventh century, he unluckily recollected a moft preffing engagement which called him inftantly to London. The occafion was fo urgent, that he could not poffibly ftay to hear the fate of fome collateral branches which were then divided from the parent ftock. Lord Monteith threw himfelf into his poft-chaife, and fo ftrongly did the connections of his anceftors roufe his domeftic feelings, that he could think of nothing but getting a good hufband for his fifter, to free her from her confinement, till different fcenes excited gayer ideas.

CHAP. III.

In this calm feat he drew the healthful gale,
The happy monarch of his fylvan train;
Here, fided by the guardians of his fold,
He walk'd his rounds, and cheer'd his bleft domain:
His days, the days of unftain'd nature, roll'd,
Replete with peace and joy, like patriarchs of old.
THOMSON.

IN the preceding Chapter I introduced my readers to the family of the bride-groom; but I muft beftow feveral on that of the bride.

Sir William Powerfcourt's was certainly a moft fingular character, and in one particular he widely differed from many gentlemen of his rank in fociety. His ftrong attachment to the feat of his anceftors was more the refult of generous philanthropy than of any lucrative confideration. 'Tis true, he confidered Powerfcourt-houfe as circumfcribing

within its domain all the beauties that fancy ever feigned; but, as he rode round his estate, his feelings resembled those of a conscientious guardian rather than of a self-accountable owner, and the landlord and master were in his beneficent bosom ever sunk in the milder qualities of the protector and the friend. His hospitable doors were open to indigence; his delicacy was never hurt by the simplicity of rustic manners; and though the indolence of his temper sometimes prevented him from taking an active part in restraining oppression, or introducing merit to its deserved reward, his liberal purse was always ready to remedy the defect. "My good neighbour "Jones," said he one day, "I certainly "might write to the lord lieutenant, "and get that rogue of an adjutant "broke, who would not admit that "your son David was of a proper size.

"for

"for the militia, though he ſwore-in "other ſubſtitutes two inches ſhorter; "but perhaps the man has nothing to "live upon but his commiſſion, and, "being very poor, is forced to do dirty "actions. Here; remember me to "David; tell him, that I like a lad of "ſpirit; and there are the ten guineas he "was diſappointed of." A little time afterward, in conſequence of ſome nefarious proceedings being diſcovered, the adjutant waited upon ſir William to entreat his interceſſion with lord W. in his behalf. He pleaded long ſervice and the hurry of buſineſs in his defence, and hinted at the wants of a large family. "Sir," ſaid ſir William, "I dare ſay that "what you tell me is very true; but as it "is not my own affair, I don't like to "write to my kinſman or trouble him "about it. But as you ſeem to have "puzzled yourſelf a little in theſe army

" matters, I think you had better try ſome
" other plan of life. I can put you into
" a farm, and make you gamekeeper
" of one of my manors; and I hope
" you won't think it an employ beneath
" you, for I ſhall always be glad to ſee
" you at Powerſcourt." The offer was
accepted; and ſir William afterwards
owned, that, beſide two years' rent,
he loſt a conſiderable ſum with which
he had entruſted him, to enable him to
ſet up; but his benevolent heart never
ſuffered him to wiſh the deed undone:
" for," ſaid he, " though I believe the
" man was no better than a cheat, his
" wife appeared to be a very notable
" woman, and brought up her family
" very well."

Sir William did not marry till he was
much on the wrong ſide of forty; and
even then that event proceeded from the
ſame principles which governed all his ac-
tions.

tions. The wife of a neighbouring gentleman delicately hinted, that one of her daughters was ſo deeply in love with him, that death muſt be the inevitable conſequence of his obduracy. The good baronet was thunderſtruck; he had no predilection for marriage, and certainly no preference for the young lady thus obtruded upon his choice. His conſcience entirely vindicated him from any wicked deſign of ſtealing the fair one's affections; neither his glaſs nor his flatterers had ever attributed to him the moſt diſtant reſemblance to an Adonis, and he wondered much that any body ſhould fall in love with his brown bob and Kevenhuller hat; but ſince it was ſo, (and the lady's mother proteſted ſhe did not exaggerate,) he never ſhould enjoy any peace of mind, if he could think himſelf the cauſe of making a fellow-creature miſerable (for ſir William could not

give entire credit to the dying part of the ftory). Rathert han have fuch a weight upon his confcience, he would marry.

Lady Powerfcourt, however, very foon after her marriage, difcovered that fhe had made a great miftake, and was incautious enough to difclofe the fecret to her hufband. It was not from the brown bob nor Kevenhuller hat that the god of love took aim when he pierced her tender bofom, nor was the mortal fhaft barbed by the virtues which adorned the refpectable character to which they were appendages. Like Hudibras's Cupid, he certainly

> " ——Fix'd his ftand
> " Upon a wealthy jointure land."

Powerfcourt-houfe poffeffed irrefiftible attractions, and fhe had heard her papa and mamma frequently affert, that if fir William would but marry a woman of tafte, it might be made one of the fweeteft

ſweeteſt places in all North Wales. She knew that ſir Ralph Morgan's lady ſpent all the winter at Bath, the ſpring in London, the ſummer at her country-ſeat, and in the autumn took a tour; that ſhe drove four in hand, gave balls, kept a groom of the chambers, and a French waiting-maid, had twelve new dreſſes a-year, and ſet the faſhions for all the country; yet ſir Ralph's eſtate was not half ſo large as ſir William's. What heart could reſiſt ſuch invincible attractions? She immediately fell very deeply in love.

I have in a former publication ventured to give my opinion, that the two faces of Hymen are not exact counterparts to each other. The ſmiling countenance which fronts the long viſta leading to his temple, has few traits of ſimilitude to the auſtere phyſiognomy which is deſcried by thoſe who, after

they have offered ſacrifice, retire behind his altar. The diſcuſſion of preliminaries might have convinced the lady that the nuptial cup contained ſome drops of an acid quality. To the charms of Powerſcourt ſhe had annexed one grand ingredient, which unhappily did not exiſt, at leaſt not in its ſuppoſed magnitude, I mean, the eaſineſs of ſir William's diſpoſition. Though "gentle as zephyr blowing underneath a violet" upon moſt occaſions, he had upon others a little of the old bachelor's tenacity about him. He would keep lady Powerſcourt a coach and ſix with all his heart, but he did not like ladies driving four in hand. She might have half a dozen Engliſh waiting-women if ſhe pleaſed, and as many Welch ones, but he did not approve of French filles de chambre. He had no objection to her giving balls to the neighbouring

young

young ladies, and ſhe might make them as happy as ſhe could; but he thought that married ladies ought not to be jigging about themſelves: and as to dreſs, ſhe might be clothed every day in ſilver brocade; but his wife ſhould never wear feathers and flowers in her head-dreſs, like a ſtage-player.

The grand point of diſpute, however, was the occupation of the four ſeaſons. He was willing to take her to town for three months, becauſe the country muſt be rather dull to women in winter, as they could neither ſhoot nor hunt; and if ſhe were not well, he would accompany her to Bath or any where that would do her ſervice; but to live at Powerſcourt only three months—what would all his neighbours ſay, and how would his tenants go on without him! My lady ſtrove to convince him that their opinions were not worth regarding; but ſir William was

firm. He had long confidered them as rational creatures, and he could not haftily renounce that opinion; befide, he was fond of farming, and deeply engaged in fchemes of agricultural improvement; and if he ftayed fo little at home, he muft either be the dupe of impofition, or renounce thofe purfuits. Here his obliging confort hinted, that, fince he was fo engaged in rural purfuits, bufinefs allowed him a fair excufe for abfence, and fhe would be willing occafionally to difpenfe with his attendance. Sir William was not remarkably quick of apprehenfion; and, certainly, moft bridegrooms in his fituation would have been inclined to refer the lady's propofal rather to the exuberant defire of gratifying his peculiar inclination, than to any latent wifh of being deprived of his fociety. He faw it quite in that poin of view; and though he made no anfwer

at

at the time, yet a retrofpective confideration of the ineffable condefcenfion which prompted her to give up what fhe had repeatedly declared to be the greateft bleffing of her exiftence, his dear converfation rather than tear him from fcenes to which he was attached, convinced him that he ought to make fome facrifice to reward fuch felf-denying complacency. One journey to Bath was therefore promifed, an annual vifit to London had been before tacitly agreed to, and I am not certain whether the overflowings of gratitude might not have compelled the good baronet to fubmit to be whirled about eighty miles a-day along rough roads by way of taking an autumnal tour, had not his lady, inftead of rewarding his compliance by a gentle fmile, affumed fomething of a mortified afpect when he announced his defign of accompanying her. He was willing to attribute this

fudden

ſudden change to her deſire of having the magnificent plans that ſhe had juſt formed for the improvement of Powerſcourt carried into execution under her own inſpection; and this hope reconciled him to ſchemes which had at firſt met with ſome oppoſition. He had objected to her deſign of cutting down the long avenue of oaks which led to the houſe, and converting the ground into a ſweeping lawn, dotted with lilacs and laburnums, interſperſed with Chineſe temples and leaden ſtatues. He was equally averſe to the removal of his ſtraight yew hedges; for, though all the world was againſt him, he conceived them more natural than the ſharp angles of that modern embelliſhment, a ſerpentine walk. He thought too that the ſtag's horns and croſs-bows were as proper internal ornaments as papier-machee decorations; and many a bitter ſigh did it coſt

coft him, when his lady's mamma and fifters joined in protefting, that, unlefs the dark Gothic windows and hideous tapeftry hangings were removed from the drawing-room, and light fafhes and India paper fubftituted in their ftead, they fhould fall into hyfterics every time they went into the room; but his tranfport at the idea that thefe propofed alterations had tended to attach his wife to a fpot which would be honoured with fuch indubitable proofs of her tafte and genius, determined him to be a paffive fpectator of every propofed alteration.

It was in the month of September that fir William was made the happieft of men. Two months were allotted to ceremonious vifitings, during which the nuptial retinue moved over every mountain, dale, foreft, and glen, which the temerity of the coachman pronounced paffable. Sir William had the gallantry always

always to accompany his lady ; he heard all her wedding paraphernalia univerſally admired, and his own brown and gold pronounced immenſely becoming, while his point ruffles were cried up as the very ſummit of elegance. Unaccuſtomed, however, to the duties of the toilet, he grew weary of white gloves and powdered perukes ; and, recollecting with pleaſure that all his viſits were paid, he reſumed his drab frock and brown bob with ſingular complacency. He was meditating a quiet ride round his farm, when my lady, entering, interrupted his agreeable reverie by informing him, that ſhe had received a letter from lady Morgan, who was then at Bath, and inſiſted upon it that they muſt come there immediately. The r oſt divine actor was juſt come out, who infinitely tranſcended Garrick when in the meridian of his powers; beſide, all the world was there, and her numerous

numerous acquaintance were anxious to be introduced to a lady of whofe beauty and accomplifhments they heard fo much. To her ladyfhip's intimation that they muft fet off immediately, fir William replied, that it certainly was impoffible; there were more than 50 workmen employed in embellifhing the houfe and gardens: but the provident forecaft of lady Powerfcourt had provided an unanfwerable refutation of this objection. She had engaged a moft capital improver to come down, and find out all the capabilities which the houfe and local fcenery poffeffed. Sir William might rely implicitly upon the tafte and judgment of this gentleman, who had given fatisfaction to moft of the nobility and gentry in the kingdom, by exercifing what might almoft be called the magic power of turning every place into fomething exactly oppofite to what it was before.

before. The family archives intimate that ſir William was more alarmed than delighted at this information; and it is ſuppoſed that the journey to Bath would have been deferred till after Mr. Outline had finiſhed Powerſcourt, if my lady had not been taken ill with a violent ſtomach diſorder the next morning, for which the phyſicians could find no remedy but an immediate uſe of thoſe ſalubrious waters which King Bladud fortunately diſcovered, to the unſpeakable advantage of all tender huſbands and indulgent fathers.

CHAP. IV.

> There Affectation with a fickly mien
> Shews on her face the roses of eighteen;
> Practis'd to lifp, and hang the head afide,
> Faints into airs, and languifhes with pride;
> On the rich quilt finks with becoming woe,
> Wrapp'd in a gown, for ficknefs and for fhew.
>
> RAPE OF THE LOCK.

THE fpeedy abatement of lady Powerfcourt's complaint announced the wifdom of the prefcription; but fhe was a long time extremely languid, out of fpirits, and too nervous to bear the fatigue of returning home to the "flaky fnow" and "warping wind," that were concomitant to the mountains furrounding Powerfcourt. In proof that her cafe required a warmer fituation, the very propofal of leaving Bath brought on a relapfe, and the extreme delicacy of her health would not even fuffer her to fpare

fir

ſir William juſt to take a little peep to ſee how Mr. Outline went on with his extenſive projects. Profound politicians are generally believed to have a real as well as an oſtenſible reaſon for their actions; and though her ladyſhip pleaded, that if he did go ſhe might probably expire without having his dear hand to cloſe *her* eyes, it is ſuſpected, that, like a good wife, ſhe wiſhed to keep *his* from witneſſing ſcenes which might irritate a more profeſſed ſtoic. Convinced that Mr. Outline's taſte would appear to conſummate advantage if no impediments obſtructed his deſigns, ſhe dragged ſir William every night to the rooms or the theatre, places ſhe was abſolutely obliged to attend, in order to prevent the low fever which attacked her every evening that ſhe was perſuaded to paſs at home.

In a little time the penſive languor of lady Powerſcourt's countenance, unfortunately

tunately miſtaken for the gloom of diſcontent, and the ſingular manners of her conſtant attendant, excited general obſervation; and the report that ſhe was a pretty young creature ſacrificed by her mercenary parents to a rich, fooliſh, jealous, old inamorato, gave an eclat to her character, which neither conſtant indiſpoſition, nor the moſt ſcrupulous attention to the variations of dreſs would otherwiſe have excited. Ladies of the firſt conſequence invited her to their whiſt parties; her box at the play attracted the moſt elegant beaux. The former found that ſhe loſt money with the beſt grace imaginable, and the latter diſcovered that ſhe had an infinitude of wit. That merciless complaint *ennui*, which all ſir William's long hiſtories and ſtill longer arguments had rather increaſed than diminiſhed, fled at the firſt touch of the faſcinating wand of public

public admiration. Some ſay, that the tyrant only yielded one victim to ſecure another; 'tis certain, that while lady Poerſcourt dreſſed, talked, laughed, and was conſidered as in the higheſt ton, ſir William concluded a long letter to his ſteward with a complaint, "That he "felt exactly like a fiſh out of water."

Intoxicated by pleaſure and adulation, her ladyſhip anxiouſly wiſhed to extend her triumphs beyond the narrow bound of a Bath ſeaſon. The itinerant world, at whoſe idol ſhrine ſhe had reſolved to ſacrifice, had now transferred its ſcene of empire to London, and ſhe was impatient to ſhine a peerleſs ſtar in a new hemiſphere; but ſome difficulties ſtood in the way. She had ſeen enough of life to be convinced that ſir William's ſtiff drapery, formal manners, and obſolete opinions, formed as direct a contraſt to the eaſy accommodating laws of modern

etiquette,

etiquette, as the ſturdy oak of the foreſt does to the bending eaſe of the pliant willow. She had heard obſervations infinitely to his diſadvantage; and though ſhe could collect no more than that he was a bore and a quiz, ſhe was very ſure that theſe cabaliſtic terms of faſhion muſt import every thing that was horrid and deteſtable. Since her evil ſtars had, previous to her *entrée* in the great world, bound her for life to ſuch a partner, ſhe muſt make the beſt of her hard fate, and endeavour to balance the miſery of his ſociety during one part of the year againſt the advantage of ſpending his money during the remainder. Lady Morgan had aſſured her, that of all places in the world a huſband was leaſt wanted at London. The late hours and perpetual routine of engagements left no leiſure for domeſtic converſation; and, ſhe added, ſir Ralph was ſo entirely of her mind, that he always devoted the

time ſhe ſpent there to the amuſements of hunting and ſhooting grouſe.

Having received information that the improvement of Powerſcourt had advanced ſo far as to defy the poſſibility of their being completed, or indeed comprehended, by any perſon but the projector, ſhe became very anxious that ſir William ſhould look a little after his eſtate, and at leaſt be there in time to attend the approaching audit. But the worthy baronet was by this time become very uneaſy about the ſtability of poſſeſſions more fragile than the wide domains of which his anceſtors had left him unrivalled lord. His good ſenſe taught him the wide diſſimilarity between his own manners and thoſe of the gay fantaſtic train who conſtantly hovered round his lady whenever ſhe appeared in public. He was certain that the *monkeys* (for he honoured them with that appellation) would

would be pert enough to laugh at his way when his back was turned; and he had ſeen ſo many ſtrange things in this world, that if he returned to Wales inſtead of accompanying his lady to town, they might fill her head with ſtranger notions than ſomehow or other the poor thing had already acquired. Her preſent ſituation rendered contradiction very difficult; but if he ſhould like her behaviour in town no better than he had done at Bath, he reſolved, when once his ſon and heir was ſafe in the world, to tell her very plainly, that ſhe was welcome to make herſelf as happy as ſhe could at Powerſcourt, but that he never would agree to any more journies of pleaſure. Solacing himſelf with this ſcheme of future reſiſtance, he yielded to the preſent torrent; and, aſſuring her that he had no wiſh to return to Wales

without her, they set off for Berkeley-square.

I would not recommend the countenances of the Powerscourts on their arrival in London, as models to a painter who wished to embody the fair idea of connubial happiness. Though the lady's might derive a few lively traits from the hope that she was entering upon a scene of conquest, yet the apprehension that sir William was projecting secret hostilities placed her exactly in the situation of a general whose movements are carefully watched by a strong army of observation which it would be imprudent openly to attack. Sir William's dislike of the journey increased every step he took, and he entered London with a firm expectation that the place and the people would prove equally disagreeable. In lieu of the taste and elegance with which lady Powerscourt was every where

fascinated,

faſcinated, he ſaw nothing but imperti-
nence and frippery. " The late hours
were inſufferable to a man who roſe at
ſix, dined at three, and diſmiſſed his
houſehold with family prayers at ten.
He was ſhocked at the refinement which
baniſhed ſerious diſcuſſion from poliſhed
circles; and he never could fully com-
prehend the duties of laborious idleneſs,
the arcana of modern viſiting, the va-
nity of univerſal acquaintance, or thoſe
reſtraints upon the emotions of genuine
nature which faſhion preſcribes and in-
ſipidity adopts. Every thing ſir Wil-
liam heard and ſaw had to him an air of
the marvellous. He could ſcarcely believe
that the admirer of vertu, who piqued
himſelf upon his knowledge of Greek and
Roman ruins, might be ignorant of the
architectural magnificence of the capital
of the Britiſh empire. He thought the
pure honour of a peer or a ſenator muſt

 be

be ſullied by condeſcending to admit a profeſſed ſharper to be the companion of his convivial hours. He never could reconcile Sunday routs with his notion of a ſteady well-regulated family; and he abſolutely interdicted lady Powerſcourt from aſſociating with what was then termed the *firſt* circle, when he came to know that ſome of its fair members occaſionally diſpenſed with the ſanctions of female decorum.

This way of thinking was certainly very ſingular; but Sir William's prejudices in theſe and a variety of other inſtances were not to be vanquiſhed by the light artillery of raillery, which was frequently played off againſt him in public, or by the more formidable battery of ſighs, tears, and faintings, by which his gentle lady ſtrove to induce him to ſpeak and look like other people. Even the tender argument, that a man who

who really loved his wife muſt adopt all her ſentiments, and conform to all her wiſhes, was ineffectually oppoſed to the rigid pertinacity with which ſir William defended the principles that he had ever conſidered to be the out-works of religion and morality. The circumſtances which had induced him to put his "free condition into circumſpection" did not appear to him to favour the claims of female ſupremacy; and he entertained the very heterodox notion, that when a lady falls violently in love, the favoured gentleman has a right to expect that ſhe will make an obliging attentive wife, rather more ſtudious of his humour, than devoted to the indulgence of her own. This is not the only notion in which the lords of the creation are miſled by that vanity of which nature has given them a preponderant ſhare. The delicacy of the female mind

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may very poſſibly be attached to the ſplendid titles, large poſſeſſions, or handſome equipages of a gentleman, when the gentleman himſelf, conſidered apart from all theſe appendages, would never *ſtrike* any body ſuperior to his dairy-maid. Would it not be unjuſt to charge a counteſs with inconſiſtency, becauſe ſhe neglected her noble earl, when all the time her heart had been only attracted by the luſtre of his coronet? The noble earl's chagrin entirely proceeds from the deluſions of ſelf-flattery, which whiſpered that his individual ſelf was the all-potent load-ſtone, when in reality the magnetic influence darted from his elegant villa and liberal ſettlement; or perhaps an enamelled watch and diamond hoop-ring, might form the infatuating taliſman. I hope this explanatory rule will be applied to all matches which proceed from the ſtrong attachment of a

"diſcreet

" discreet young creature" to a "very good sort of a man a few years older than herself." It might preserve many a respectable bachelor from the vexation of disappointment, and prevent the censorious from fixing the charge of inconsistency upon many a lady's character, who rather deserves admiration for unshaken constancy. But to return from my digression—

Fashion, who in one of her whimsical moments elevated lady Powerscourt into a first-rate toast at Bath, capriciously denied her in London the eclat to which she now conceived herself entitled. The gloss of novelty was past, and the attraction of the ridiculous was lessened by the appearance of fresh eccentricities in newer characters. She dressed with greater taste, and her repartees possessed superior wit and brilliancy; but the gazer

gazer and the liftener no longer announced her triumph.

My matronly friends affure me, that one prime ingredient of marriage felicity is, that you always have a helpmate at hand, to whom you transfer the burden of faults and misfortunes. Lady Powerfcourt could find no other reafon for her going out of fafhion, than that fir William, not content with his own fingularities, had abfolutely prohibited her from dafhing in a grand ftyle. No entreaties would prevail upon him to let lord Jehu drive her in his phaeton up the park in a morning, though his ponies were the fweeteft little fpirited creatures in the world, and the ride would be of infinite fervice to her health and fpirits. Her head was nine inches lower than any body's at the opera, and though moft ladies wore fruit and vegetables by way of aigrette, and lady Morgan

fported

ſported a beautiful bunch of amethyſt grapes with a little gold chaffinch pecking at them, ſhe herſelf muſt wear nothing but plain riband and blond. She might not even play for gold; nay, ſir William was ſo puritanic, and ſuch an enemy to a little harmleſs mirth, that ſhe was forced to be as cautious in avoiding a *double entendre* or a witticiſm upon prieſtcraft, as if ſhe were wife to the Archbiſhop of Canterbury. What woman of ſpirit could brook ſuch reſtrictions? If ſhe muſt be moped up, better return and ruſticate at Powerſcourt, than ſit like Tantalus within reach of the deſired enjoyment which ſhe was not permitted to ſhare. She hinted to her huſband ſomething like a wiſh to do ſo in a moment of moody diſcontent, occaſioned by his peremptory declaration that ſhe ſhould not go to a maſquerade, though the ticket was pro-

 cured,

cured, the dreſs beſpoke, and the party formed for the happy occaſion. He for once cordially acquieſced in her wiſhes, by declaring, that it was the very plan he meant to propoſe. "I am ſure, my "dear," ſaid he, "your health has "been greatly injured by living in this "ſmoky unwholeſome place; and the "late hours and conſtant racketing have "worn your poor nerves all to pieces. "You have quite loſt your colour, and "are not half ſo cheerful as you uſed "to be when galloping over the Welſh "mountains; but a little good country "air will ſoon ſet all to rights again; "and ſo take leave of your friends; for, "ſince you wiſh it, I am determined to "ſet off for Powerſcourt on Monday "morning."

The general tenor of ſir William Powerſcourt's character was yielding philanthropy, but he could at times aſſume a quiet

a quiet firmneſs which diſconcerted op-poſition. Her ladyſhip muſt either diſ-pute or faint, and ſhe choſe the latter as the moſt gentlewomanlike ſtyle of contradiction. Sir William was very ſorry, and very aſſiduous to reſtore her; but the reviving fair ſaw no ſigns of compunction in his countenance, nor did he, by inquiring after the cauſe of her diſorder, give her an opportunity of pointing out the only means of prevent-ing a relapſe. Indeed, he was become rather callous to die-away arguments; and though his native candour ſpurned ſuſpicion, their frequent recurrence led him to doubt the exiſtence of the ſto-mach ſpaſms whence this diſagree-able excurſion had originated. I mean by theſe obſervations to caution my readers to be very ſparing in the uſe of theſe *chef-d'œuvres* of female general-ſhip, becauſe the too great frequency of

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an ambufcade only puts the enemy more conftantly upon his guard. Violent hyfterics, floods of tears, and every fign of gentle defpondency, confirmed fir William in the conviction that his lady's life depended upon her removing immediately from a place where fhe was fo dreadfully indifpofed; and fhe found herfelf on Monday morning on the road to Caernarvonfhire, maugre the opinion of all the fine ladies of her acquaintance, united to her own, that fhe was much too weak to bear the journey, and would certainly expire before fhe got twenty miles out of London.

CHAP. V.

With here a fountain, never to be play'd ;
And there a fummer houfe, that knows no fhade;
Here Amphitrite fails through myrtle bow'rs;
There gladiators fight, or die, in flow'rs.

POPE.

THE traveller who purfues a road with which he is unacquainted always finds unexpected pleafures mingled with unforefeen misfortunes. A bright funbeam often diffipates the gloom of a dreary country; the inconvenience of a rugged road is frequently counterbalanced by the magnificence of the furrounding fcenery; an occafional companion relieves fatigue; and even the mortification of a bad inn and indifferent accommodations generally tends to heighten the relifh of future convivial enjoyments.

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The pilgrim who ſpeeds along the road of life generally encounters a ſimilar mixture of pain and pleaſure, not merely in the aggregate, but intimately blended in every event. The roſe grows ſo cloſe to the thorn, that you cannot gather it without encountering a painful ſenſation; while on the other hand our attention is diverted from the minute wound by the exquiſite fragrance of the flower. The pains and pleaſures of man, like the world he inhabits, partake of the viciſſitude of his own character. I beg pardon for theſe ſeemingly irrelevant reflections; but the garrulity of old age can ſeldom reſiſt an opportunity of moraliſing.

Nothing could be more melancholy than the ſituation in which I left lady Powerſcourt in my laſt Chapter, except that of ſome fair damſel in romance, whom a terrible Saracen is carrying away to his enchanted

enchanted caſtle. The twentieth mile-ſtone was paſſed, yet Atropos, though oft invoked, forbore to extend her mortal ſhears, when an unexpected ſource of conſolation ſuddenly preſented itſelf —not in the ſhape of a knight armed *cap-a-pié* with ſpear and buckler, nor in the more modern accoutrement of a fine gentleman with a brace of piſtols ; and, to ſay the truth, though a rencontre with lord Jehu juſt at this criſis might be a very popular incident, I am glad that ſir William, for whoſe character I cannot help feeling a degree of regard, was not drawn into any military adventures. I enjoy the idea of his reſpectable figure, perfectly ſatisfied with his victory, riding compoſedly by the ſide of his chariot, and wondering if he might venture to get into it at the next ſtage. Lady Powerſcourt's conſolations were derived from the philoſophic temperament of her

own

own mind. She recollected that ſhe ſhould have it in her power to diſplay ſuch a wardrobe as had never before blazed on the aſtoniſhed inhabitants of Caernarvonſhire. That Powerſcourt was now converted into a perfect paradiſe, and ſhe ſhould reign the unrivalled Armida of the enchanting region, every part of which would announce her directing taſte. Prudence ſtepped in alſo to the aid of Patience, and whiſpered that though ſhe had been defeated in a conflict for ſuperiority, yet, if ſhe carefully kept her own ſecret, ſir William would never betray her, and ſhe had only to ſay that ſhe was tired of London, which was in reality nearer the truth than ſhe imagined. Perhaps a degree of remaining pique might ſuggeſt the reſolution that, as ſhe now perfectly underſtood her huſband's temper, it was only ſtudying the art of tormenting inſtead of

of the art of cajoling on any future occaſion; and then, though ſhe might not be able to triumph, ſhe would at leaſt make good her retreat.

Theſe placable ideas ſo happily prevailed, that when they ſtopt at St. Alban's for refreſhment, her ladyſhip on alighting offered her hand to the baronet with the beſt grace in the world, and anticipated his inquiries how ſhe had borne her journey, by declaring that he was quite right in ſuppoſing the country air would do her good, for that ſhe already found herſelf much better. Sir William was equally delighted with the change, and puzzled to gueſs at the means by which it had been effected. Somebody or ſomething was very much to blame; but for his life he could hardly tell where the fault lay, whether in the contagious atmoſphere of London, in his lady's caprice, or his own ſuſpicions.

ſuſpicions. However, he now found himſelf inveſted with plenitude of power; and, like a prudent monarch, he began to conſider in what way he ſhould exert it; but his generous heart had been ſo ſoftened by his lady's conceſſions, that he poſitively reſolved upon no further exerciſe of his prerogative, than that lady Powerſcourt ſhould pay her formal viſits by herſelf in future, and that he would never more wear his white and ſilver.

Peace and unanimity prevailed during the remainder of the journey. It was night when they entered the old manſion, and the examination of its beauties was deferred till the next morning; but the tranquillity of the good baronet was then put to a ſevere trial. The ſaloon was certainly fitted up in the moſt elegant manner; but the houſekeeper removed every idea of comfort by her information that the chimney ſmoked ſo violently,

violently, that it was abſolutely impoſſible to have a fire; and, conſequently, that it muſt be uſeleſs nine months in the year. The aſpect of the dining apartment was equally dreary; the proſpect indeed was enchanting, but the ſaſhes ſtarted about an inch from the frames; and the warped doors were unfavourable either to a graceful exit or entrance, as it was only by means of kicking and puſhing that any one could either advance or retreat; and as the chimney, the windows, and the doors, were all conſtructed uniformly, any alteration was dangerous, perhaps impracticable. The ready invention of lady Powerſcourt diſcovered, that, as theſe could only be proper for ſummer apartments, ſome little ſnug parlour could be fitted up for general reſidence; and they proceeded to the library. This was lofty and extenſive; but Mr. Outline's taſte

tafte for decoration feemed to have annihilated its primary intention; for the multitude of bufts, models, and ftatues, left no fpace for books. Sir William continued his moralifing tour through the reft of the ftate apartments, which might be truly faid "to keep the promife to the eye, and break it to the fenfe," and concluded his journey in the great hall, where, as he fought in vain for the long oaken tables and forms which ufed to adminifter to the regalement of his tenants at Chriftmas and other feafons of periodical feftivity, her ladyfhip reminded him, how charmingly it was now appropriated to the purpofe of a ball-room or a theatre. She directed his attention to a light gallery at the upper end defigned for an orcheftra, and beautifully decorated; but this elegant embellifhment was not in a ftate to bear infpection, it having broken down with

with old Morgan the blind harper, who had exhibited in it the preceding evening juſt by way of hanſel, he ſaid, while the houſemaids and gardeners were footing it a little below for recreation becauſe his Honor was coming home again.

Sir William left my lady to conſtruct ways and means for ſupporting the tottering edifice, and, with a deep ſigh and a ſecret murmur againſt new-fangled trumpery, proceeded to examine the out-door ſcenes. The taſte of Mr. Outline for objects had induced him to remove ſeveral uſeful edifices to inconvenient ſituations, while he occupied their places with erections of no form nor likelihood, which continually drew from the impatient baronet the exclamations of "What is this for?" and "What does this mean?" The ſtews were all drained, and their places occupied by the ruins of a naval amphitheatre,

tre, while the ſtream that ſupplied them was taught to hop from pebble to pebble in diminutive imitation of old Conway's foaming flood, which roared, in proud magnificence, at a little diſtance. The windmill had given way to a temple dedicated to Æolus; and the pigeon-houſe was ſucceeded by an aviary of foreign birds, none of which, in ſir William's opinion, were ſo beautiful as the goldfinch, or ſung like the nightingale. As walls were unpictureſque, they, and the fruit-trees which they ſupported, were every where metamorphoſed into ha-ha's! A fine grove of oaks, which ſcreened the houſe from the north winds, was cut down to admit the proſpect of a bleak mountain, and the place of the hardy foreſters was occupied by the tender magnolio and frail accacia, at leaſt by their remains, for the beautiful exotics had been already killed by the froſts, or broken

broken by vernal ſtorms. In ſhort, to adopt the owner's deſcription of the houſe and gardens, "The former was "very taſty and very inconvenient; and "in the latter there was nothing that "you wanted, but there were ruins and "heathen gods in abundance."

Sir William's diſguſt did not prevent lady Powerſcourt from exhibiting herſelf to infinite advantage in the office of Ciceroni, and ſhe continued to point out the beauties of the new improvements, till her neighbours had exhauſted every topic of adulation, and her own tongue grew weary of the pleaſing tale. It is ſuggeſted, that the inconveniencies I have enumerated afterwards ſtruck her more forcibly than any one elſe; and that her reaſon for hating Powerſcourt was, that no human creature could be well or comfortable in ſuch a cold dreary wilderneſs ſort of a place. Nor did

did her ſplendid attire afford a more permanent ſatisfaction: in ſome articles of dreſs ſhe was anticipated, in others outſhone; and none excited aſtoniſhment after their firſt exhibition. Alas! if happineſs be not ſeated in the mind, even the gratification of our wiſhes will not enſure its poſſeſſion.

A few months after her ladyſhip's return to Powerſcourt, my Heroine firſt ſaw the light; and though ſir William had rather it had been a boy, he received the little ſtranger with all the enthuſiaſtic joy of the fondeſt parental tenderneſs. He thought the winning ways of the dear little cherub muſt communicate that happineſs to the maternal boſom, which ſomehow or other (a favourite expreſſion of ſir William's) it had hitherto failed to experience. But while the exuberance of his own joy was diſplaying itſelf in the uſual ſtile of overflowing be- nevolence

nevolence and hoſpitality, his lady was ruminating on the poſſibility of being at Cheſter races; and, contrary to the opinion of her matronly friends, ſhe reſolved on the hazardous expedient of a too early appearance in public. A ſevere cold was the immediate conſequence; and the neglect of the firſt maternal duty, joined to inattention to her own ſafety, was ſoon obſerved to have occaſioned a total change in her conſtitution. Years of ill health, confinement, and ſevere ſuffering, proved the melancholy forerunner of premature death.

From the account I have already given of lady Powerſcourt, the reader will not ſuppoſe that patience tempered the bitter cup of woe with its lenient ſweets. Her mind was deſtitute of natural ſtrength, her temper poſſeſſed no native gentleneſs, her education taught her rather

to conceal than to ſubdue the irritability of her diſpoſition; and, being ſolely confined to the acquirement of a few external accompliſhments, no mental treaſures were laid up in ſtore againſt the bitter day of adverſity. The loſs of health and beauty at five-and-twenty may certainly be conſidered as a ſevere deprivation; and when to thoſe evils lameneſs and occaſionally ſevere ſuffering were added, it could only be a compoſed and elevated mind that could patiently ſupport the ſevere conflict. Lady Powerſcourt's ideas of pleaſure had been adjuſted to the limited model which faſhion and fortune preſent to their narrow-minded votaries: what conſolations could they provide to mitigate the horrors of a ſick chamber, when the ſoul can only divert the preſent gloom by conſolatory retroſpects of its paſt conduct,

duct, or exhilarating anticipations of its future reward?

The passive spirit of interested dependance could scarcely support the wearisome petulance of the unhappy sufferer; and though sir William's philanthropy and habitual easiness made him exert more forbearance than generally belongs to the character of a husband, his gentleness sometimes proved unequal to the arduous conflict, and he felt a depressing inquietude which even the smiles of his little girl could not constantly divert. Though calamity renders the selfish mind still more callous to the sorrows of others, it stimulates benevolence to increased exertions. Lady Powerscourt was just relieved from one of her severest attacks, when her servant brought her a letter, which, after a slight perusal, she tossed contemptuously upon the table.

"You ſeem diſturbed my dear," ſaid ſir William, who happened to be preſent.

"No wonder," returned her ladyſhip; "ſurely I have troubles enough of my "own without being peſtered with "other people's; but it is like the uſual "inconſiſtency of that thoughtleſs crea-"ture's character."

"Whom do you mean?" ſaid the benevolent baronet, whoſe attention was rouſed at the idea of ſomebody being in diſtreſs.

"I mean a very imprudent, but a "very diſtant relation of mine, who "flung herſelf away in marriage with "lord Milford's tutor, a little before I "became lady Powerſcourt; and ſhe is "now, as ſhe might have foreſeen, "ſtarving."

"Poor foul!" ſaid ſir William, reaching the letter; when finding by the peruſal

rufal that it contained an appeal not only to the humanity but alfo to the honour of his lady, he fixed his eyes upon her with fome degree of refentment, and exclaimed, " How came you to forget " the poor woman? Why, you pro- " mifed to do fomething for her huf- " band!"

" She interprets general expreffions " too largely," refumed her ladyfhip; " I have done her a great many fa- " vours, and fhould have done her " many more; but I found out that fhe " was bafe, ungrateful, and not worthy " of my notice."

" I am forry for it with all my heart," replied fir William; " fhe really " writes like a fenfible woman and a " good Chriftian."

" Moft people with whom I happen " to difagree, are fo in your opinion."

 " My

"My dear, I am ſorry to hear you "diſturbed; your ſide is in pain again "I am afraid."

"It was a great deal better; but "this woman's impertinence brings on "all my old complaints."

"No, no, it won't; only keep your-"ſelf quiet; but pray, as I am quite a "ſtranger to the ſtory, will you tell "me what this Mrs. Evans did, to "make you ſo very angry with her?"

"I told you, ſir William, ſhe fell "in love with a nobleman's tutor, and "married him contrary to the advice "of all her friends. My father was "ſo incenſed, that he declared if ſhe "ſtarved, he would never take the leaſt "notice of her any more. But I was "very kind to her, and I ſent her ſome "of my caſt-off clothes when I mar-"ried, which, I ſuppoſe, encouraged "her to the unheard-of impudence

which

" which ſhe has been guilty of. Be-
" cauſe ſhe had been a ſort of humble
" friend when we were quite girls, ſhe
" had the effrontery to beg me to intro-
" duce her huſband to you; a fellow,
" whoſe grandfather was nothing but a
" travelling pedlar. Did you ever know
" ſuch audacity?"

Doubtleſs ſir William would have felt very angry, if one of his own relations had contaminated the blood of Powerſcourt by mixing it with the " puddle of a pedlar," and his reſentment might have continued, till he diſcovered that he had it in his power to do the diſgraced couple an act of ſervice; but he thought it very ridiculous that a family of yeſterday ſhould in this inſtance pretend to the ſame delicacy with one that could be traced through untold centuries. Her ladyſhip, perceiving that the glow of reſentment did not kindle

in his countenance ſo faſt as ſhe ex-pected, added by way of climax, " And
" ſhe ſent the letter the very day when
" ſhe knew I intended to receive com-
" pany;—only think of endeavouring
" to occupy my attention at ſuch a
" time."

" I think," ſaid ſir William emphatically, " that poor Mrs. Evans has been
" very unfortunate in applying when
" you were either too much engaged
" by pleaſure or pain to attend her. But
" a promiſe is a promiſe, let people
" claim it when they will."

Lady Powerſcourt's conſcience here gave her a ſevere pang, and ſhe confuſedly anſwered, that ſhe was ſure ſhe never meant to make any engagement; ſhe durſt ſwear that ſhe never ſaid ſo; at leaſt, if ſhe had, ſhe had quite forgotten it.

" Very likely, very likely," replied the good man; " you never meant what
" you

" you ſaid, and ſo forgot all about it.
" But you ſee ſhe has remembered it, and
" perhaps the world may think that it is
" owing to me that you have not kept
" your word, at leaſt according to Mrs.
" Evans's account of the matter; how-
" ever, I will try to clear up the miſ-
" take; and as ſhe is your friend and
" relation, they ſhall not be left de-
" ſtitute."

Sir William here roſe, and hurried out of the room, while lady Powerſcourt loudly diſclaimed the word *relation*, proteſting Mrs. Evans could not be nearer than a ſecond couſin, which ſhe counted nothing at all.

CHAP. VI.

One ſelf-approving hour whole years outweighs
Of ſtupid ſtarers, and of loud huzza's.

POPE.

THE benevolence of ſir William Powerſcourt was not confined within the narrow limits of relations and friends. It was not annihilated by the ſuppoſition of ingratitude, nor did its delicate ſenſibility ſhrink from the contact of human infirmity. It ſeemed a ray of that beneficence which cauſes the ſun to riſe upon the evil and the good, and the rain to fall upon the juſt and the unjuſt.

Nor was his idea of charity limited to the virtue of beneficence. Combining with his natural placability of temper, it produced the moſt cordial deſire of being at peace with all mankind, and made

made ready forgivenefs almoft outftep offence. He mounted his horfe, and rode to Llangollen. On the road he meditated not on the faults of lady Powerfcourt, for perhaps his imagination was afraid of venturing into fuch an ample field, but on the fpeedieft means of alleviating the evils which her neglect had caufed. Having heard an excellent character of the Evans's from fome neighbouring gentlemen, he haftened to the cottage which fheltered modeft worth. He found the wife engaged in the humble offices of domeftic bufinefs, while the hufband was rocking a little baby to fleep, and penning his Sunday difcourfe. However inelegant thefe occupations might be, fir William Powerfcourt fancied that they both looked like very fenfible people, and very good Chriftians.

The buſineſs of introduction was ſoon adjuſted. Poverty had enfeebled but not extinguiſhed the light of lettered ſcience and poliſhed manners which formerly irradiated the Evans's, and benevolence had entirely baniſhed all ceremonious reſerve from their reſpectable gueſt. He informed Mrs. Evans that he had a little girl as pretty as that which lay aſleep in the cradle, but that her poor couſin lady Powerſcourt had ſcarcely enjoyed a day's health ſince it was born. At the mention of lady Powerſcourt a deep bluſh ſuffuſed Mrs. Evans's face, which, though it in reality proceeded from her anxiety to know the effect of a letter which ſhe had ſecretly diſpatched without her huſband's conſent, and contrary to his known opinion, ſir William miſtook for the glow of reſentment, and very much diſliking to ſee any body angry, he attempted a conciliatory

ciliatory explanation of his wife's conduct. His defence, indeed, amounted to little more than that, when people were much engaged either by pleaſure or pain, they were very apt only to think of themſelves: yet ſo powerful was his rhetoric, that the burning bluſhes on Mrs. Evans's cheek were ſoon quenched by a flood of tears; and though ſir William was not abſolutely unacquainted with tears of anger and diſdain, he was convinced that theſe were of a milder quality. Mrs. Evans's grief was accompanied by the livelieſt expreſſions of regret for lady Powerſcourt's ſufferings, and the moſt anxious wiſhes for her recovery. Sir William's eyes ſhone with kindred ſenſibility, he drew his chair cloſer to the fire, preſſed her hand with the freedom of long intimacy, and cheerfully partook of the homely fare with which the hoſ-

pitality

pitality of Mr. Evans had covered the little deal table.

He then took occafion to afk the particulars of their fituation, and foon found that it was penurious in the extreme. Every refource had been tried, every friend applied to; but refources are not inexhauftible, and even friends do not always anfwer the calls of indigence with prompt relief. The favour which had been folicited of lady Powerfcourt was only her recommendation to a neighbouring clergyman, who allowed his curates the fplendid ftipend of fifty pounds per annum. This circumftance, unintentionally difcovered, drew from fir William a deep figh, and the exclamation of, "Well, I could not think "that poffible!"

The little girl now awoke, and the good baronet, who was become a great

con-

connoiſſeur in nurſery tranſactions, ſeemed much attracted by its infantine charms. Finding that the difficulty of procuring ſponſors had hitherto cauſed the chriſtening ceremony to be delayed, he offered himſelf to undertake the office, adding a few words expreſſive of his ſenſe of its ſolemn importance; and, having preſented the mother with what he called his uſual offering on ſuch occaſions, a bank-note of fifty pounds, he took leave of the enraptured pair with many kind aſſurances that they ſhould ſoon hear of him again.

Providence ſeemed to aſſiſt ſir William's generous reſolution of making ample proviſion for oppreſſed merit. His domeſtic chaplain, on receiving the preſentation to a valuable prebend, with noble moderation, vacated the living of Powerſcourt, worth near four hundred pounds per annum. The character and

abilities

abilities of Mr. Evans ſeemed to point him out as an eligible ſucceſſor; but it appeared to be an inſuperable difficulty to gain lady Powerſcourt's approbation of ſuch a plan. Luckily, however, the lady was not quite inexorable. The humane concern which Mrs. Evans expreſſed for her illneſs had been placed in the ſtrongeſt point of view, and if it had not wrought upon her gratitude, it at leaſt, by recalling to her memory the obliging companion and the attentive friend of her younger years, perſuaded lady Powerſcourt to acknowledge, that in her preſent ſituation ſuch a neighbour would be a deſirable acquiſition. Her apprehenſion of being diſgraced by the recognition of her couſin was relieved by the fortunate communications of ſome morning viſitors, who, having heard that ſir William had publicly announced his intention of providing for Mr. Evans,

ſlew

flew to inform my lady that he was the "*charmingeſt* and moſt *delightfuleſt* preacher in the world; that Mrs. Evans too, though an excellent manager, was an amiable agreeable creature, quite the gentlewoman both in manner and appearance."

Sir William had purpoſed uſhering in his intended diſpoſal of the living of Powerſcourt, by obſervations on the loſs they ſhould ſuſtain by Mr. Jones's removal, and how highly deſirable it was to have an agreeable neighbour at the rectory. He intended next to allude to Mr. Evans's reputed ſkill at back-gammon, and to inquire if his wife was not a very chatty, converſable woman; but my lady ſtopped his exordium in the midſt by one of thoſe ſweet ſurpriſals in which the reader will perceive ſhe abounded, and begged him as a favour to compliment her couſins with

with the presentation,—a request which was granted with equal astonishment and joy.

Those who have been accustomed to dread the censures of their own hearts, and to suppose that an unwarrantable indulgence of the irritable passions must produce self-condemnation, will probably wonder that lady Powerscourt should wish for the society of a person whose presence must administer perpetual reproach to her conscious mind; but her moral creed was formed upon different principles. She thought it as much impossible for a person of fortune to behave ill to an inferior, as for a beauty to be capricious, or a wit satirical. Each of these characters had a privilege to be rude, tyrannical, and censorious; and as their faults required no atonement, every body was bound, upon the smallest change of behaviour on their parts, to

lose

lose the remembrance of past storms in ravishing admiration of the present gentle breeze. Though endued herself with that trembling sensibility which bleeds at every pore, she doubted the existence of feeling in the subordinate orders of mankind; and though she had left her friend sinking in all the horrors of want, without stretching forth her hand to support her, she would have thought that friend the most ungrateful being in the world, if she had refused to dedicate her time to the task of endeavouring to alleviate her real or fancied sorrows.

Mrs. Evans certainly could feel, but she could also forgive. In her behaviour to lady Powerscourt she appeared to remember nothing but that she was the friend of her early youth, and the wife of her revered benefactor. "It is my "duty," she used to say to her husband, when he kindly reproved her for

devoting

devoting ſo much time to the painful and unwholeſome confinement of a ſick chamber: "Conſider," ſhe continued, "how much we owe to ſir William's "bounty, and how much it befits us to "try to alleviate thoſe troubles with "which Providence thinks fit to prove "the worthieſt of human hearts." In this opinion Mr. Evans acquieſced, and only cautioned her not to injure her invaluable health.

Ten years ſucceſſively rolled away without producing any remarkable change at Powerſcourt. The Evans's continued to devote their chief attention to the duties which gratitude, ſympathy, and pity required. Soothed by their ſociety, enraptured by the attractive ſweetneſs of his enchanting daughter, and ſuſtained by the exalting conſciouſneſs of a life of uſefulneſs and rectitude, ſir William endured the hourly

vexations

vexations by which the increaſed irritability of lady Powerſcourt's temper contrived to cloud every enjoyment in which ſhe could no longer partake. It ſeemed as if her example was intended as an awful warning to the pride of beauty and the pride of wealth. She lived to be diſguſting and dependant, but ſhe did not live to feel and acknowledge that her faults required the righteous chaſtiſement.

Sir William's deportment at her death was marked by that decent propriety which characterized all his actions. He did not affect to be inconſolable, but he treated her memory with becoming reſpect. He ſubmitted to the inconvenience of the little parlour and the ſummer apartments, becauſe it would look like unkindneſs to his poor wife to reſtore things to their old ſtate again. From the ſame motive he kept the

 temples

temples and ſtatues in good repair, though he either forgot their names or miſtook their ſituations; and though he rather diſliked dogs, he permitted an old black ſpaniel to be his conſtant companion, becauſe it ſeemed to be the only thing to which ſhe ſhewed any attachment. Yet bitter remembrance would ſometimes extort from him, in the company of very particular friends, the confeſſion, "that the poor woman "had very odd ways, but people who "are always ill are apt to be whim-"ſical."

It was the general opinion of the country, that the good baronet would never more engage in a matrimonial connection, and this ſeemed to be the more extraordinary, as it was known he ardently wiſhed to tranſmit his fortune and honours to a lineal deſcendant of his own name. Whether in-

fluenced

fluenced by delicacy ariſing from paſt happineſs, or corroded by the recollection of paſt ſorrows, it is certain he never appeared perfectly at eaſe when love or marriage was the topic of converſation; and though remarkable for uniform civility, the words, "fine feeling," and "acute ſenſibility," when uſed in their general import, always drew from him an emphatical "*Nonſenſe!*"

CHAP. VII.

—She was fair beyond your brighteſt bloom,
(This Envy owns, ſince now her bloom is fled,)
Fair as the forms that, wove in Fancy's loom,
Float in light viſion round the poet's head.

Whene'er with ſoft ſerenity ſhe ſmil'd,
Or caught the orient bluſh of quick ſurprize,
How ſweetly mutable, how brightly wild
The liquid luſtre darted from her eyes!

Each look, each motion, wak'd a new-born grace,
That o'er her form its tranſient glory caſt:
Some lovely wonder ſoon uſurp'd the place,
Chas'd by a charm ſtill lovelier than the laſt.

MASON.

My readers, whom I introduced in the beginning of my ſecond Chapter to the marriage of Geraldine Powerſcourt with the earl of Monteith, will perhaps complain of the intervening circumſtances which retard my account of the events immediately ſubſequent to thoſe auſpicious

cious nuptials. They will probably blame me for beginning in the middle, and then going back to the firſt part; but I have not even yet quite unravelled the clue which led to that event, and muſt entreat their patience a little longer. Nothing is ſo impoſing upon the generality of the world as an air of ſuperior information and ſelf-confidence; I ſhall therefore, inſtead of acknowledging myſelf to have been in an error, proceed to ſtate, that this apparent inconſiſtency is the effect of plan, and ſanctioned by authority.

I can plead the example of many ingenious luminaries, who ſolely owe their reputation to a ſkilful generalſhip in the arrangement of their plans. Some have choſen to make a ſecond volume take precedence of the firſt; others have objected to the formality of a beginning; and a third ſet have diſdained the pe-

dantry of a conclusion. Several of the wits of the last age wrote pages on their own pre-existent state; and many writers of our times have penned volumes, which, if they have any meaning, tend to prove that it would have been better had they not existed at all. Some suppose the road to fame lies through the labyrinth of inexplicable paradoxes; while others, who publish one book to disprove what they have written in another, seem to think that, in order to advance, it is necessary to move backward like a crab. In vain does Criticism attempt to restrain these excursive flights:—the modern Pegasus is too restive to endure the rein, and too volatile to attend to the lash; and most writers have succeeded, who have attempted to found their reputation on the broad basis of singularity; for what greater proof of originality and spirit

can

can be given than by doing or ſay-ing ſomething which ſurpriſes or terrifies every body?

But though theſe huge Leviathans may thus toſs and ſport as they pleaſe in the great deeps of literature, the leſſer fry of authors muſt ſubmit to ſome pre-cautions, or endure the harder alterna-tive of annihilation. Our moroſe taſk-maſters not only impoſe upon us the hard laws of having a beginning, a mid-dle, and an end; but they ſtate the ne-ceſſity of unity of deſign, and an atten-tion to coſtume in age, place, and cha-racter. As I purpoſed, therefore, to treat of the effects ariſing from the mar-riage of lady Monteith, it became ne-ceſſary for me to hurry into the midſt of the ſcene, and to bring forth Powerſ-court-houſe in "high pomp jubilant;" and, like Homer, Virgil, and Milton, to adjuſt relative circumſtances in an

 epiſodical

episodical manner. In one respect I differ from these high authorities, by making myself the relator; but even here I have an ingenious fiction ready to obviate critical asperity. It is only supposing me the old Nestor of the fable, or the chorus of the scene, and I may tell as many long stories as I please, and moralise whenever I have an inclination, without offending against any of the statutes of Parnassus in that case made and provided. I will now introduce my Heroine upon the stage.

The connection between a lively sensible girl and a sickly petulant parent could be but slender; the concern, therefore, which Geraldine felt for Lady Powerscourt's death was soon overcome. She had long considered Mrs. Evans as more truly fulfilling the maternal character; and she felt for her judicious, firm, but affectionate reproofs, that

that filial deference which the eternal whine of her mother's complaining censures failed to inspire. Under the care of an experienced governess and celebrated masters, procured at unsparing expence, she rapidly acquired every female grace and suitable accomplishment; but it was to the instructions of Mrs. Evans, and to the tender friendship of her daughter Lucy, that her mind was indebted for its richest treasures.

At the age of seventeen she appeared an enchanting beauty; polite, sensible, accomplished, affable, and generous; the idol of her father, the delight of her friends and dependants, the envy of the neighbourhood, and the object to which every man of fortune in the county secretly aspired:

> " --She was indeed the glass
> " Wherein the neighbouring youth did dress themselves."

Miſs Powerſcourt's example would ſanction a ſmall abſurdity; and her enchanting manners excited a herd of awkward imitators. They forgot, however, that it was her wit which ſupported her opinion, and her graceful beauty that gave elegance to the form of a bonnet, or adjuſted the drapery of a robe.

Some faſtidious obſervers, who, cold to the faſcination of captivating lovelineſs, contemplate "the human form divine" with the ſame cautious diſcrimination with which they would analyze the merits of a picture, pointed out ſome ſhades in this faſcinating portrait. They obſerved, that her vivacity at times approached to levity; that, under the form of eaſy *nonchalance*, her eye was on the watch for adulation; and that the perfections which nature had ſo liberally beſtowed loſt their moſt delicate attractions

attractions in the consciousness of possession.

To these observations Candour replied, that even levity was pardonable in youth and beauty, when it appeared to be the artless offspring of a happy innocent heart; that inexperience would apologize for the faults which proceeded from an exuberant flow of animal spirits, a strong desire to please, and a disposition uncommonly prone to the most generous disinterested confidence; that it was impossible for her to escape the knowledge of her own perfections, when every tongue was loud in her praise, and there were none to dispute her claim to pre-eminence; and that it was even amiable in her to wish to display those excellencies which seemed ever to communicate delight to others. I have stated the debates which were caused by the appearance and manners of Miss

Powerſcourt, and ſhall only obſerve, that in point of numbers the applauders had it.

Many were the detractors and imitators which the fair Geraldine excited; but one young lady, who was neither her rival nor her copyiſt, loved her with unaffected tenderneſs. The character of Lucy Evans was perfectly her own; it was caſt in nature's moſt artleſs mould, and finiſhed by the unremitting attention of an intelligent mother and an exemplary father. Inferior to her friend in perſonal charms and expenſive accompliſhments, ſhe was yet very pretty, very ſenſible, very amiable, and as well educated as the daughter of a country clergyman need wiſh to be. Early taught the difference between a young woman whoſe fortune muſt ariſe from the ſavings of four hundred pounds per annum, and the heireſs of twice as many thouſands, ſhe never

never made the indulgences of Miſs Powerſcourt the model for the regulation of her own enjoyments and deſires. She had read much, ſhe had thought more; her leiſure for ſtudy and reflection was greater than her friend's, and her mind imperceptibly acquired ſuperior energy. Her knowledge of the world was confined to the manor-houſe and the rectory; at the former ſhe ſometimes met mixed characters; her ſenſibility made her ſtrongly feel their improprieties, and her ſincerity generally betrayed thoſe emotions.

The ladies were friends in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the word; but when I own that there was no other young perſon within ſeveral miles with whom Miſs Powerſcourt could properly form an intimacy, my readers will probably condemn me for aſcribing the term friendſhip to an intimacy which rather proceeded from

 chance

chance and locality than from taſte and ſelection, and will probably predict that it was very likely to be annihilated in the rude changes of the joſtling world. The following pages will diſcover how far they are right; it ſhall ſuffice for me at preſent to affirm, that at the time I am treating of the attachment was mutual and ſincere.

While the fair Geraldine bent over the harp with the grace of a Calliope and the execution of a Cecilia, Lucy ſat quietly at her plain work in a corner of the room, and enjoyed the applauſe which her friend's maſterly performance ever excited. But when Miſs Powerſcourt's ſkill in muſic, drawing, embroidery, fillagree, and every other faſhionable acquirement, had been diſplayed, Miſs Evans could not wholly eſcape obſervation, at leaſt if any perſons in company were ſufficiently liberal to

turn

turn their eyes from the dazzling ſplendor of fortune to the mild luſtre of modeſt independence. Though her obſervations did not proceed from a mouth exquiſitely formed, nor were enforced by eyes of peculiar brilliancy, they beſpoke a correct intelligent mind, and were accompanied by an arch *naïveté*, or an ingenuous earneſtneſs, which ſeemed at once to develope the ſpeaker's artleſs amiable mind. Exulting at the attention which her Lucy's remarks obtained, Miſs Powerſcourt ever delighted to lead the converſation to topics on which ſhe knew her to excel; and when the party was large, modeſt diffidence was often charmed out of its intended ſilence by the affectionate artifices of the miſtreſs of the feaſt.

Without attributing too much to the allurements of wealth, it may readily be believed, that Miſs Powerſcourt's hand

was an object of general contention. After having, in the ſpace of two years, refuſed more unexceptionable offers than the moſt invincible heroine of modern romance can boaſt, ſhe was introduced to the earl of Monteith at Cheſter race-ball, and at her chaperon's requeſt accepted him for a partner. Their ſimilitude in graceful beauty, age, fortune, and connections, pointed them out to the whole company as a moſt ſuitable match; and a little policy was admitted, that the peerleſs pair might not be ſeparated the whole evening. The next morning his lordſhip appeared early upon the courſe, where diſmounting without once diſcuſſing the merits of the race-horſes, or attending to the weighing of the drivers, he took his ſeat in the ſtand next to Miſs Powerſcourt, and during the whole morning ſeemed to forget that he had ſeveral thouſands depending upon

upon the iſſue of the courſe. In the evening he was again at the ball, again requeſted the hand of his former partner, and, without once ſpraining his ancle or complaining of inſufferable heat, danced till three o'clock the next morning. Every body was now ſure that he was captivated, and the whole county were on the tiptoe of expectation.

On the very day of her return to Powerſcourt, Geraldine ſet out in ſearch of her Lucy, and entreated that ſhe would come and ſpend a little time with her at the manor. It was impoſſible for Miſs Evans to avoid obſerving, that her friend's account of the ball, the dreſſes, and the manners of the company, was very much embarraſſed, and deſtitute of its uſual vivacity. On entering the dreſſing-room Geraldine locked the door, and, throwing her arms around her Lucy's neck, told her ſhe had a ſecret to divulge

vulge which was of the greateſt importance. On receiving a promiſe of inviolable ſecrecy, Miſs Powerſcourt attempted to explain; but after ſeveral ineffectual attempts to begin the diſcovery, ſhe ſaw ſome company coming over the lawn, and, promiſing her friend to be more explicit at another time, ſhe unlocked the door and haſtened to receive her gueſts.

It was more than a week before Miſs Evans could find leiſure from her domeſtic occupations to viſit Powerſcourt-houſe, in order that ſhe might receive the ſacred truſt. She now found her friend's lively ſpirits ſtill more ſubdued; ſhe was abſent, frequently ſighed, played with her mother's picture, which hung ſuſpended by a pearl chain on her boſom, ſketched figures upon the table with her netting needle, and, though unuſually affectionate in her expreſſions, ſeemed

feemed lefs inclined to confide the ftory of her troubles than at their former interview. Neither Mifs Evans's difpofition nor education were in the leaft romantic; fhe could only perceive that her friend had met with fome great vexation, and fhe was too delicate to endeavour to pierce the veil which concealed thofe forrows; fhe therefore contented herfelf with fecretly wifhing the painful anxiety fpeedily removed.

But, though Mifs Evans was thus fhortfighted, my readers have probably difcovered enough of the diforder to acquit me of introducing extraneous matter, though I fhould inftantly revert to lord Monteith. On dancing with Mifs Powerfcourt the firft night, he publicly declared that fhe was the fineft girl he had ever feen: the converfation in the ftand convinced him that fhe was uncommonly clever; and at the inter-

view the ſecond evening ſhe appeared with ſuch captivating grace, that he loudly proteſted ſhe was the moſt elegant woman in the world; and that Geraldine Powerſcourt was almoſt enough to induce any man to ſubmit to the yoke of marriage. The friends to whom he uttered theſe rapturous exclamations reported them to their mothers and ſiſters, who repeated them to their acquaintance; but the rough maſculine ſentiment, when filtered through the organs of female delicacy, ſpoke in a much ſofter and more inſinuating tone. All the ladies proteſted that the earl of Monteith was deeply enamoured with Miſs Powerſcourt; that he thought her the divineſt creature that ever exiſted; that he was dying for an opportunity of throwing himſelf at her feet; and that his whole earthly happineſs depended upon her. This high-flown language, repeated

peated by every viſitor, certainly vibrated on the ear of the fair Geraldine with a pleaſing ſound. She conſidered the abſurdity of the expreſſion to be entirely chargeable on the repeater, but that the ſentiment was undoubtedly his lordſhip's. She only anſwered by the words "How ridiculous! How infinitely abſurd!" but ſhe bluſhed and ſmiled while ſhe reproved, and made no effort to change the converſation to a more *ſenſible* ſubject. Every body obſerved, that ſhe ſighed frequently, talked leſs, and could remember none but plaintive tunes. The lovely pair were therefore certainly mutually ſmitten; and it was earneſtly hoped that ſir William would not waywardly attempt to interdict their union.

A month elapſed, yet the enamoured ſwain had neither flung himſelf at the feet of his dulcinea, nor taken any other ſtep to ſecure the prize upon which his whole

whole earthly happineſs depended. This delay, though it coſt the lady a little chagrin, was yet upon the whole beneficial to his lordſhip's cauſe. She had time to reflect upon all he had ſaid, and all he had looked at their former interviews; and though her own knowledge of his character was limited to the obſervation of uncommon elegance of figure and a gentlemanlike addreſs, the whole world (I mean that part of it with which Miſs Powerſcourt was acquainted) proteſted that he was a moſt amiable and accompliſhed nobleman. Theſe vague indefinite terms may be compared to the outline which travellers frequently preſent of newly-diſcovered countries, leaving ſpace for ſucceeding adventurers to embelliſh the chart by placing rivers, bays, and mountains where they ſuppoſe they may be found. Miſs Powerſcourt exerciſed all her inventive powers

to

to fill up the ſketch of lord Monteith's character. She marſhalled all the virtues and agreeable qualities, and placed them in the propereſt ſtations. Wit was ſupported by taſte and learning, generoſity was circumſcribed by prudence, and heroiſm was tempered by the moſt melting ſenſibility. In fine, the portrait was enchanting, but the likeneſs was ideal; the fair deſigner however, like Pygmalion, became deeply enamoured with the creature of her own imagination,

CHAP. VIII.

O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly
To seal love's bonds new made, than they are wont
To keep oblig'ed faith unforfeited.——
O Love, be moderate, allay thy ecstasy;
In measure rain thy joy, scant this excess:
I feel too much thy blessing, make it less,
For fear I surfeit!

SHAKESPEARE.

LORD MONTEITH was quite a Benedict, and had determined not to encumber himself with a wife, unless he found it impossible to be happy without one. He hastened from the rural shade and moping solitude, which, if not the mother, is certainly the nurse of Love. He plunged into the dissipation of London, visited the court, the opera, the pantheon masquerades; but the lovely form of the Cambrian enchantress pursued him [illegible] every retreat. Nay, even at the

the gaming-table, when hundreds were depending upon the odd trick, ſhe roſe to his view in all the ſplendor of her ball-room ornaments; bending her waving plumes, ſhe gently ſtruck him with her magic fan, and, begging him to be attentive to the delightful dance which was juſt begun, made him loſe the game.

If my limited obſervation of the male character may be truſted, the difference of ſoul in the two ſexes is no where more plainly ſeen than in their manner of encountering vexation. A lady in lord Monteith's circumſtances, upon finding her heart irrecoverably loſt, would have devoted her time to woods and groves, and, only breathing her paſſion to ſome dear confidante, would have found a luxurious indulgence in complaining of her ruthleſs ſtars; but his lordſhip, when he diſcovered that even

cards

cards and dice could no longer occupy his mind, ordered poſt-horſes, and in leſs than forty-eight hours arrived at the ſeat of his friend lord W. in Caernarvonſhire, to conſult on the propereſt method of making propoſals to the lady who had cauſed ſuch cruel devaſtation.

It was agreed, that a very gallant addreſs to Miſs Powerſcourt ſhould be incloſed in a reſpectful letter to ſir William; and, to give the proceedings more weight, lord W. offered to be courier. He found the father and daughter tête-à-tête; the latter roſe on his announcing particular buſineſs; but on his adding, with a ſignificant look, that it concerned lord Monteith, ſhe ſeemed rather to loiter in her attempt to leave the room. "Stay, my dear love, if you like it better," ſaid ſir William, "for I have no ſecrets from you." The permiſſion was very agreeable; ſhe walked to the oppoſite

opposite window, and seemed only occupied in playing with her favourite Italian greyhound, while her father was circumspectly examining the seal of the packet, and decyphering the armorial honours of the Macdonalds.

"Here is a letter too for you, Geraldine," said sir William. She turned to receive it; but encountering the eyes of lord W. the liveliest confusion was imprinted on her countenance. She would have given the world to escape the explanation, which, but a moment before, she was impatient to hear. Luckily a servant announced the arrival of Miss Evans, and she hastened to receive her friend, while lord W. as he attended her to the door, politely whispered that her triumph was complete, and entreated her to be as merciful as she was invincible.

Sir

Sir William had by this time perused his letter, and sunk into a profound reverie, from which he was roused by the eulogium which lord W. pronounced on the rank, talents, fortune, and connexions of his noble friend, the warmth of his attachment, and the uncommon excellencies of Miss Powerscourt.

Though sir William listened with the most delighted attention to the panegyric on his daughter, he discovered great uneasiness during the description of lord Monteith's passion; and as soon as lord W. had ended his harangue, he expressed his hopes that the account was not quite true. His noble guest took fire at the imputation of exaggeration, and confirmed every thing he had before asserted with violent protestations.

" Then I beg your lordship's par-
" don," said sir William; " and I do
" assure you, that I had not the smallest
" design

"design of offending; for, I dare say,
"you never told me more than what
"you thought was truth; and very pos-
"sibly lord Monteith may think so too.
"Young men and women are apt to
"suppose themselves in love, and I
"hope it is no more in the present case;
"for I should be very sorry to have
"my girl make a worthy gentleman
"miserable."

Lord W. pleaded that his noble friend was certainly one of the first matches in the kingdom.

"Undoubtedly," replied sir William;
"and yet, no disparagement to the Mac-
"donalds, the Powerscourts are quite
"as ancient and respectable. But, to tell
"you the truth, I am not very fond of
"lords, at least not for sons-in-law. Ge-
"raldine will have enough if her husband
"has not a shilling, and I would rather
"she should bestow herself upon some

" worthy man who would keep up my
" family, than fink my name and fortune
" in that of any peer in the three king-
" doms."

Lord W. obferved, that by a fuitable arrangement in the marriage-writings the family name might be preferved.

Sir William rather fretted at thefe expedients. " I have told you, my
" lord," faid he, " that I think very well
" of the Macdonalds; it is an ancient
" name, and an honourable family; it
" has given birth to a great many true
" lovers of their country; but I hope
" lord Monteith will not be offended
" with me, if I fay that I prefer my own.
" In fhort, my lord, there is a young man
" whom I think of for Geraldine; and
" a great bleffing, let me tell you, fhe
" will be to him."

Lord W. recollected a young man of the name of Powerfcourt, whofe education

tion had been defrayed at ſir William's expence, and who occaſionally viſited at the manor; but as he was known to be entirely dependent upon his patron's bounty, no one ſuppoſed him the deſtined huſband for the heireſs of Powerſcourt. His lordſhip's aſtoniſhment was ſo great that he could not help aſking, whether the lady aſſented to this extraordinary diſpoſal of charms which might add honour to a dukedom.

" I have not yet told her my plans," ſaid ſir William; " ſhe is very young at " preſent, and I would not cut ſhort her " happieſt days. She is ſo attached to " me, that I am ſure it will be almoſt " death for her to leave me; but as ſhe " is my only child, I muſt marry her " to keep up my family. I aſſure your " lordſhip, ſhe is a very ſenſible girl, " and will have no notion about duke-

 doms,

"doms, unless other people put it in "her head."

Lord W. asked if the happy youth knew his envied destination.

Sir William did not like to be thus catechised; he, however, answered in the negative. "I don't think it right," said he, "to have young men made "vain. He is a modest good lad now, "and will enjoy his fortune better, and "know how to do more good with it, "for having been without one when he "was young. I assure you, my lord, "you are the first person to whom I ever "mentioned my plan, though I formed "it as soon as my wife died, never in- "tending to marry again. It is out of "respect to lord Monteith that I men- "tion it, because I would not have him "think that I refuse his addresses in an "uncivil manner. But had I not be

"write

"write a few lines to his lordſhip, as
"he was ſo polite as to write to me?"

Lord W. promiſed to be a faithful reporter of what had paſſed, and they ſeparated mutually diſſatisfied, lord W. conceiving ſir William to be the moſt extraordinary old quiz he ever converſed with; and ſir William wiſhing the flaſhy young men would let his daughter alone, being certain that ſhe was perfectly happy if they would not torment her.

While this ſcene paſſed in the breakfaſt-parlour, Geraldine was peruſing her letter in the dreſſing-room, commenting on its paſſionate but reſpectful contents, and owning to her dear Lucy that it was impoſſible to deny lord Monteith's merits. She could now repeat all the adventures of Cheſter races; her account was lively and intereſting, yet ſufficiently ſentimental to explain to Miſs Evans the reaſon of her abſence and her

 ſighs.

ſighs. She waited her father's ſummons with impatience, and flew to dinner with ſo light a foot as would ſcarcely have preſſed down

> "The goſſamer
> "That idles in the ſummer's noon-tide air."

but it was obſervable, that ſhe returned with

> "Even ſtep and muſing gait,
> "Sober, ſtedfaſt, and demure"

I need not account in diffuſe terms for the change. Sir William had informed her of his abſolute rejection of lord Monteith, in a manner which evidently proved that he expected ſhe would be as well ſatisfied with his conduct in this particular, as ſhe had been in every preceding inſtance, it never occurring to ſir William that ſhe could be at all intereſted in the addreſſes of a ſtranger.

Though Miſs Powerſcourt had certainly acted with girliſh precipitancy in attaching

attaching herſelf to the idol of her own imagination; and though, with the common philoſophy of nineteen, ſhe ſuppoſed nothing ſo irretrievable as a wandering heart, ſhe really was what ſir William eſteemed her to be, a very amiable and very ſenſible girl. She not only loved her father's perſon, but ſhe alſo venerated his character. The emphaſis that he laid on the word *ſtranger* induced her to reflect on the hazard of beſtowing her hand upon a perſon with whom ſhe was ſo ſlightly acquainted; and though ſhe continued to believe that lord Monteith poſſeſſed all the real virtues of which ſhe had conjured up the reſemblance, yet ſhe thought there would be no impropriety in letting the latent excellencies expand. In fine, ſhe was too reſpectful as a daughter to eſtabliſh an open oppoſition to her father's intentions, and too delicate as a female to think of

 encou-

encouraging an addreſs which wanted the ſolemn ſanction of paternal approbation. If lord Monteith's paſſion were ſincere, it would not be repreſſed by difficulties; and if it ſtood the trial, ſhe knew the warmth of ſir William's affection to her too well to fear his final rejection, when he ſhould know that her happineſs depended upon his aſſent.

If my readers think theſe reſolutions too magnanimous to correſpond with the character of a young lady accuſtomed even to that ſolicitous indulgence which prevents our wiſhes, who never viewed the world but on its brighteſt ſide, and who never ſaw

> "Hard unkindneſs' alter'd eye
> "Mock the tear it forc'd to flow;"

let it be remembered, that ſhe had in Mrs. Evans a friend of a ſuperior caſt to what moſt heireſſes can ever hope to poſſeſs; a friend who, having no

ſiniſter

finifter views, had no occafion for fervility or flattery;—a friend, who to an exalted turn of mind united the courage to enforce unpleafant truths, and generofity to overlook cafual errors.

We have feen that gratitude to fir William reconciled Mrs. Evans to the painful task of attending lady Powerfcourt during her long illnefs. When death terminated what fhe conceived to be her duty in that particular, fhe confidered the fituation of his daughter. Young, amiable, idolized, poffeffed of fuperior beauty and uncommon vivacity, by what more noble method could fhe evince her gratitude to the father, than by fhowing the unwary girl the fhoals and quickfands which abound in the voyage of life?

Mrs. Evans's early knowledge of what is called the great world convinced her, that though refinement may interpofe

its flimſy veil, the unamiable paſſions prevail in the higher circles as much as in the cottage; and that the pilgrim who wiſhes to purſue a ſafe courſe muſt unite the ſerpent with the dove. While, therefore, ſhe ſtrongly recommended to Miſs Powerſcourt the extirpation, not the concealment, of every ungenerous, violent, and ſelfiſh principle, as the happieſt means of enſuring internal peace, ſhe taught her to apprehend external danger from the violence and ſelfiſhneſs of others, however concealed by the fair appearance of poliſhed manners, or even by profeſſions of attachment. But, above all, ſhe ſtrongly imprinted on her pupil's mind a veneration for her father's character. She not only pointed out his active benevolence, patient gentleneſs, and firm integrity, but led her to conſider the general propriety of his opinions upon any ſubject with which

 he

he was thoroughly acquainted; and though his reclufe habits had caft an air of fingularity over his natural good fenfe, yet his plain firm ftile of thinking was not only better but wifer than that flexible judgment which bends, contracts, or expands, as the world, that is, as caprice determines. Nothing could be more judicious than thefe inftructions. Mifs Powerfcourt's parts were lively and brilliant, quick in difcovering the ridiculous, and powerful in expofing it. Though virtue, benevolence, and fond indulgence, muft have obtained the warm affection of her grateful heart, her refpect for fuch a father could only be founded on the perfuafion which fhe had imbibed in her early youth of the natural fuperiority of his uncultivated underftanding.

The confcioufnefs of yielding to a weaknefs which Mrs. Evans would dif-

approve, had kept her from informing Lucy of the ſtate of her heart prior to lord Monteith's declaration, and the ſame ſentiment forbade her diſcovering any ſtrong uneaſineſs at her father's rejection of his addreſſes. In relating the affair ſhe only obſerved with a ſuppreſſed ſigh, that ſhe thought his lordſhip infinitely the moſt amiable and deſerving of any of her ſuitors; but ſince her father diſapproved the connexion, ſhe ſhould acquieſce in his deciſion, and heartily wiſh the earl happy with ſome other lady; in which wiſh, however, it may be queſtioned whether ſhe did not make a little uſe of the long bow.

The enamoured earl was not at this time in ſo quieſcent a ſtate. He was quite in a humour for

"Moving accidents by flood and field;"

Or,

"For hair breadth 'ſcapes in th' imminent
"deadly breach."

One

One time he refolved to ftorm the caftle and free the lady from durance; at another time decided to ftretch his rival in the bloody duft. The probability of the fair one's being offended by the firft project foon made him abandon that; and there feemed fo much cruelty in killing a man who did not even know that he was an impediment to his happinefs, that his lordfhip's cooler judgment pronounced that the latter would be too fanguinary. After confidering all the plans which antient and modern romance fupplies, the old fcheme of Jupiter and the fhower of gold was preferred. But it was not to Danaë that the Caledonian Jupiter defcended in that form; it was to Danaë's waiting maid.

The very evening after this phenomenon had taken place, Mifs Powerfcourt faw a letter upon her dreffing-table, fuperfcribed in characters which fhe perfectly

perfectly recollected. The Cambrian Abigail was not an adept in her profession; for on being questioned how it came there, she neither affirmed that she saw a Cupid fly in with it at the window, nor even hinted that it might be conveyed there by fairies, or rise out of the table by the power of enchantment. She neither invoked goblin nor witch, but simply owned that lord Monteith begged her to deliver it, and she thought there could be no harm in complying with the request of such an agreeable gentleman.

"If you do not know your duty to "my father, Bridget, I know mine: "return it immediately to his lordship; but stay; I think I will add a "few words."

Mrs. Bridget blessed her goodness, and began an harangue on his lordship's virtues,

virtues, which her miſtreſs ſilenced with a look, and ſhe retired.

The opener of Pandora's box was a gentleman. Let the gentlemen therefore behold one of the ſex whom they brand with the ſtigma of curioſity, ſitting with a Pandora's box ſealed before her, yet forbearing to lift the interdicted lid. She wrote a few lines which expreſſed her abhorrence of a clandeſtine correſpondence, without intimating perpetual enmity againſt the correſpondent, and, incloſing his lordſhip's letter, rung her bell, and ordered it to be delivered by the very firſt opportunity. She refuſed Mrs. Bridget's attendance that evening, and betook herſelf to the repoſe which conſcious rectitude and ſelf poſſeſſion can alone enjoy.

CHAP. IX

——A prudent father,
By nature charg'd to guide and rule her choice,
Reſigns his daughter to a huſband's power,
Who, with ſuperior dignity, with reaſon,
And manly tenderneſs, will ever love her;
Not firſt a kneeling ſlave, and then a tyrant.
THOMSON.

LORD MONTEITH and his friend were forced to project freſh meaſures; for Mrs. Bridget was ſo unwilling to offend her dear generous young lady, that ſhe refuſed to appear any more upon the ſtage, and yet her gratitude to the dear generous young gentleman induced her to conſent ſtill to take a part behind the ſcenes. She ſuggeſted that her lady would ſoon pay a viſit to a neighbouring family; that ſhe would go on horſeback, only accompanied by Mr. John the groom; that the road lay through a neigh-

neighbouring coppice, but that lord W. as well as fir William had keys of the fidings; and fhe concluded with obferving fignificantly, that Mr. John was a very well-behaved man, no liftener, and too *difcreet* to fay any thing.

The excurfion was undertaken at the appointed time; but the inftant Mifs Powerfcourt entered the wood, fhe faw a gentleman on horfeback approaching, whom, in another inftant, fhe knew to be lord Monteith. Her firft intention was to turn back, but fhe was prevented by John's having dropped the key in the long grafs, juft as he had locked the gate. Anger was ufelefs, indeed unreafonable; for the poor man was endeavouring to repair his careleffnefs by looking for it very anxioufly. Though fhe could not but fufpect that the rencontre was concerted, fhe had fufficient confidence in her own dignity to overcome

overcome her firſt agitation. Retreat was impoſſible, and ſhe advanced ſlowly to the dreaded interview.

On the gentleman's ſide there was expreſſed an infinitude of love, admiration, and deſpair, blended with ſome degree of reſentful ſenſibility at the idea of being compelled privately to ſolicit a bleſſing to which he had thought himſelf entitled publicly to aſpire. On the lady's there appeared a juſt ſenſe of female decorum, and a ſteady reſolution to repreſs any acrimonious obſervations on her father's conduct. But the moſt intereſting part of the converſation took place after lord Monteith had explained ſir William's reaſons for rejecting his addreſſes, and aſked her if ſhe would accept the lover he deſigned to propoſe.

"Aſſuredly I will not," was her anſwer. "Should my father ever ex-

" press such intentions to me, I must
" be as firm in refusing my hand where
" I cannot bestow my heart, as I now
" am in rejecting your addresses while
" he disapproves of them."

"Most admirable of all human crea-
" tures!" exclaimed Monteith, " I will
" patiently commit my destiny to the
" care of a lady whose exalted ideas in-
" crease my esteem for her at every in-
" terview; yet permit me to add one
" more inquiry. Might I venture, madam,
" to hope, or should I have been too pre-
" sumptuous in hoping, that if I had
" been honoured by sir William's ap-
" probation, I should not have encoun-
" tered the terrors of your refusal?"

Miss Powerscourt's reply was con-
fused and inarticulate; yet the deep crim-
son which flushed her half-averted face,
and the softness of her accent, did not
reduce him to despair. She perceived
it

it did not; and as soon as she had recollected herself, she added, "I know the "goodness of my father's heart; I know "his unbounded affection for me; and I "am confident that he will persist in no "plan that would make me miserable. "But let me entreat you, my lord, not "to pursue a method of addressing me "which must either make me mean "in my own eyes, or diminish my "respect for your character." His lordship bowed, and, protesting inviolable obedience and unaltered love, rode off just at the instant that John found the key which enabled Miss Powerscourt to pursue her expedition. Her conduct in this interview did not lessen her in the lover's affections, for he vowed to lord W. that she was an angel in a human form, and that he was determined either to die or obtain her.

Nor

Nor did the Evans's, to whom Miſs Powerſcourt impartially related this incident and that of the letter, feel any diminution of the love and eſteem which the many amiable qualities of their charming young friend had long excited. On the contrary, Mrs. Evans beſtowed warm encomiums on the marked propriety of her conduct, and Lucy's eyes ſhone with that humid luſtre which the praiſes of her dear Geraldine always called forth. Sir William's ſcheme for the intended diſpoſal of his daughter's hand excited general ſurpriſe, mingled with ſome ſhare of diſapprobation; and, though uniform reſpect for his character prevented Mrs. Evans from expreſſing any doubt of the propriety or practicability of the ſcheme, the artleſs open-hearted Lucy was ſo ſtrongly perſuaded of its impropriety, that the moment Miſs Powerſcourt retired, ſhe could not avoid

reprobating

reprobating the abſurdity of allowing her friend ſo little influence in an affair ſo infinitely momentous to her own happineſs.

" It is certainly wrong," replied Mrs. Evans, " and may be added to the " inſtances I have frequently repeated " to convince you of the neceſſity of " conforming a little to the notions of " other people; for I have often ob- " ſerved, my dear girl, that you have " more tenacity of opinion than one ge- " nerally meets with in a young woman " of nineteen. Do not ſuffer ſingula- " rity to creep upon you; for though " it only now appears in wearing your " hair ſmooth, while all your acquaint- " ance have theirs curled, or in ex- " preſſing your diſlike to muſic when all " the world is muſical, it may twenty " or thirty years hence induce you to " lay more abſurd ſchemes for the

" marriage

" marriage of my grandchildren than
" even ſir William's ſo much reprobated
" plan."

Lucy replied laughing, "I will put
" my hair in rollers this very evening,
" which will, I truſt, remove your ap-
" prehenſions reſpecting the prepoſter-
" ous matches of your grandchildren."

" If you, my dear," continued Mrs.
Evans, " recollect the circumſtances
" of ſir William's life, and analyze his
" character, his preſent deſign will ap-
" pear the natural reſult of both. The
" virtues which ſpread proſperity and
" joy all around him are not the reſult
" of thoſe refined feelings, thoſe elegant
" ſuſceptibilities, which uſurp the place
" of ſolid virtues in the eſtimation of
" too many. They are the effect of
" reflection, of principle, of chriſtian
" principle, my dear, that firmeſt found-
" ation for all that is truly excellent
" in

" in man. But though his idea, that
" the gifts of fortune are only an ac-
" countable ſtewardſhip, makes him
" uniformly and perſeveringly upright
" and generous, it does not ſupply thoſe
" nicer touches of the heart which na-
" ture never originally beſtowed. Ex-
" cluſive of what he feels for Geral-
" dine, I queſtion whether his heart
" was ever touched by any ſentiment
" livelier than univerſal benevolence."

" How came he to marry then?" in-
quired Lucy. The air of *naïveté*
with which ſhe ſpoke would have di-
verted Mrs. Evans at another time; but
when applied to the preſent ſubject it
recalled painful ſenſations. " It was not
" a love-match," ſaid ſhe, after a long
pauſe; " and I fear lady Powerſcourt
" did not ſtudy to excite thoſe ſenti-
" ments of eſteem and attachment in
" ſir William's mind, which her en-
" gaging

" gaging attentions would have in-
" ſpired. Though I believe he never
" felt a ſtronger tie than what aroſe
" from habit and compaſſion, his na-
" tural goodneſs made him behave to
" her, during the trial of a long ſick-
" neſs, with ſo much tenderneſs, that
" he was univerſally accounted a moſt
" excellent huſband. You know, Lucy,
" he is not apt to make obſervations on
" people or incidents which do not
" immediately affect himſelf. The world
" ſlides by unnoticed, if it do not el-
" bow him; and though this may con-
" duce to the tranquillity of his mind,
" it prevents him from enlarging his
" ſtock of information. Can you,
" however, wonder, from what he has
" felt and from what he has obſerved,
" that he ſhould ſuppoſe mutual attach-
" ment unneceſſary in a union between
" two worthy people? and you will al-

" low Miſs Powerſcourt and her couſin
" anſwer that deſcription."

" Moſt certainly they have the beſt
" hearts in the world; but is not lord
" Monteith too a moſt worthy charac-
" ter, and in point of rank and for-
" tune a more deſirable match?"

" Fortune, my dear, though in moſt
" marriages a very neceſſary ingredient,
" is of little conſequence in the diſpoſal
" of Miſs Powerſcourt; for her here-
" ditary affluence is ſo great, that ſhe
" may poſſeſs every indulgence ſhe can
" wiſh for, without the neceſſity of
" her huſband's adding any thing to
" the paternal ſtock. I am not one of
" thoſe who ſlight the advantages of
" rank; I allow it to be deſirable; but
" if you balance againſt it the apparent
" juſtice of beſtowing a rich heireſs on
" her father's neareſt male relation,
" who is educated in the ſame princi-
" ples,

"ples, and will reside upon the same
"spot where his ancestors have flou-
"rished, who will most probably con-
"tinue to diffuse the same noble bene-
"volence and patriarchal hospitality; I
"protest, when I think of these advan-
"tages, I can condemn nothing but sir
"William's characteristical indifference
"to the state of his daughter's affec-
"tions. But I observe, Lucy, that of
"late you always seem uneasy and absent
"when we talk of Henry Powerscourt;
"are not you and your old friend and
"playfellow upon as good terms as
"usual?"

"Yes, quite so."

"Then should you not rejoice at the
"prospect of his good fortune?"

"So I do, but poor lord Monteith—
"I cannot help [illegible] thinking of
"him. I am [illegible] my very heart

"that he ſhould be left unhappy, he is "ſo uncommonly amiable."

"Pray," ſaid Mrs. Evans, "how "came you to know that he is ſo un-"commonly amiable and excellent?" Miſs Evans confeſſed that her informant was Geraldine.

"Ah poor Geraldine!" ſaid Mrs. Evans, "the eye I ſee has outſtepped "the judgment; I hope it has not "miſled it. What very amiable qua-"lities could ſhe diſcover in a ball-"room? Does the indirect mode of his "purſuing your friend, ſince her fa-"ther's rejection, argue any very ex-"alted excellence?"

"No," ſaid Lucy, "indeed it does "not; but do, my dear mother, make "allowances for his very ſtrong attach-"ment. I am afraid too my ſweet "friend's heart is irrevocably his, and "ought ſhe to marry Henry Powerſ-

"court,

" court, all worthy and good as he is,
" while her affections are another's?"

" Your mother's conduct," replied Mrs. Evans, " has shewn her decided
" opinion upon such a question, nor
" has she ever found reason to regret
" the preference which has made her
" the wife of the worthiest of men.
" Yet, if in the present conflict of Miss
" Powerscourt's passions I could hope
" that my warning voice might be heard,
" I would intreat her to consider, whe-
" ther, since her attachment is not the
" result of long acquaintance and im-
" partial observation, but the transient
" start of sudden preference, it be not
" at least possible that her father's plan
" for her happiness may be the most eli-
" gible? She can never now have an
" opportunity of knowing lord Mon-
" teith's real disposition previous to the
" marriage ceremony. The cautious

 " lover

" lover will difclofe nothing which is
" difagreeable, where he ftudies to re-
" commend himfelf to favour; and what
" can fhe learn from the vague or per-
" haps interefted communications of
" others? Charge her then, my dear
" Lucy, in your moments of endear-
" ment and privacy; if your Geraldine's
" happinefs be dear to you, charge her
" to reflect on Henry's known virtues,
" his modeft diffidence, ingenuous gra-
" titude, and gentle, yet generous dif-
" pofition. Afk her, if thefe are not
" the qualities which muft infure hap-
" pinefs, and warn her not to miftake
" a tranfient liking for an infurmount-
" able attachment."

Mifs Evans burft into tears at her mother's pathetic injunction, and promifed obedience.

CHAP. X.

True dignity is his, whose tranquil mind
Virtue has rais'd above the things below;
Who, every hope and fear to heaven resign'd,
Shrinks not, though Fortune aim her deadliest blow. BEATTIE.

WHILE Youth with democratic violence pulls down Reason from her sovereign seat, and commits the helm to a rebel rout of passions; Age, finding these riotous principles quiet and manageable in his own particular territories, supposes it easy for others to keep them in equal subjection, and affirms that the absolute unlimited monarchy of the ci-devant princess is not only the best mode of government, but actually the most feasible. It is not wonderful that Youth should deny the power of those restrictive principles which time and experi-

ence gradually introduce; but certainly Age might remember the ſentiments that it once felt.

The above obſervation, though profoundly true in general, is, I confeſs, irrelevant to the caſe before us; for ſir William Powerſcourt had exactly the ſame opinion of love at the time I am treating of, as he had forty years before; and Mrs. Evans was of ſo ſingular a taſte, and had ſo thorough a contempt for a "ſet of features and complexion," that, like Deſdemona, ſhe ſaw her huſband's "features in his mind;" for when ſhe ſelected Mr. Evans, who had no perſonal graces to boaſt of, ſhe not only encountered embarraſſed circumſtances, but diſpleaſed her relations by rejecting a rich and handſome, but abandoned admirer.

A few days after the events related in my preceding Chapter had taken place,

place, ſir William's bailiff begged his Honor's leave to tell him ſomething that made him unhappy. It was, that he had twice ſeen a very fine gentleman whiſpering with Mrs. Bridget in *Ellis's* temple in the dark hour. The groom, he added, ſeemed to know ſomething about it, for he laughed, and ſaid Bridget had got a London ſweetheart; but Roger ſomehow thought, though he knew that ſecond-handed gentlemen in London dreſſed as fine as their maſters, that this looked to be another guiſe kind of body. Sir William thanked Roger for his fidelity, ſhook his head, and obſerved that the world grew worſe and worſe every hour; to which obſervation Roger, who was of the ſame age with his maſter, cordially agreed.

Previous to theſe communications of faithful Roger, ſir William had felt a conſiderable ſhare of uneaſineſs. He

recollected that lady Powerſcourt was very fond of relating long narratives of reſiſtleſs beauties, who, by their unrelenting cruelty, had compelled their deſperate lovers to carry them off in chariots and ſix, ſurrounded by armed footmen, maugre all their tears and cries; and though ſir William had always conſidered theſe tales to be entitled to an equal degree of credibility with thoſe of Mother Gooſe, his anxiety for Geraldine reminded him, that if lord Monteith had ever happened to hear any of theſe ſtories, they might have put ſomething in his head which he would not otherwiſe have thought of. He determined therefore to inform Henry Powerſcourt of his deſigns in his favour, and to conſign his daughter to a huſband's protection ſome years ſooner than he had intended.

That

That young gentleman paſſed the college vacations at Powerſcourt, and excited the eſteem of every intelligent obſerver by his ingenuous diffidence, unaffected gentleneſs, and a thouſand unequivocal proofs of a generous, grateful heart. His countenance was open, and his features agreeable, though they had no pretenſions to beauty; his figure was naturally good, but he ſeemed quite at a loſs how to manage it to the beſt advantage. He was ſaid to poſſeſs very reſpectable literary talents, but the perpetual raillery of the lively Geraldine againſt pedants made him profoundly ſilent upon topics which he was beſt qualified to diſcuſs. Of the world he was totally ignorant; and he ſeemed, like his reſpectable kinſman, to be not very anxious to be initiated into its myſteries. Afraid of being abſurd, he never ventured to trifle; ignorant of

the ſmall talk of the day, too ſtudious and retired during his college reſidence to enrich his mind with alma-mater anecdote, or to learn the art of practical joking; conſcious of his dependant ſituation; ſolicitous to avoid intruſion; and ever fearful of offending; he certainly appeared with a reſerve and gravity unuſual at his age; and he might in a mixed company juſtify Geraldine's obſervations, that he looked like perpetual preſident of the club of the humdrums.

Miſs Powerſcourt's vivacity found continual employment during her couſin's viſits in what ſhe called teaching him the graces, and rubbing off college ruſt. But though an exuberant flow of youthful ſpirits made her ſometimes purſue theſe topics further than her good nature would have permitted, had ſhe known that it gave pain to the object

of her raillery, ſhe felt for him the tenderneſs of a ſiſter, and treated him with the confidence of a friend. Her heart was truly generous: I do not ſpeak of that light, tranſient, and ſometimes affected diſregard for money which young people, who have never experienced its utility, often careleſsly diſplay; but of that real liberality which could circumſcribe its own deſires to increaſe the comforts of thoſe around it. Far therefore from regretting the ſums which ſir William expended in Henry's education and ſupport, or viewing the progreſs which he made in the good baronet's affections with envy or jealouſy, ſhe continually urged him immediately to beſtow upon the valuable oddity, as ſhe ſtiled him, that independence which his noble mind richly deſerved. " I even tell him," ſhe would ſay to her Lucy, " that in ſo doing he will make

" me

"me happier; for I cannot help
"feeling that I was thrown in the way
"moſt unſeaſonably to mar that dear
"fellow's expectations. But for me,
"you know, Lucy, he would have been
"heir to all my father's princely for-
"tune."

Such ſolicitude for Henry's intereſt had convinced ſir William that his ſcheme was in the moſt proſperous way; and when, deeming the golden harveſt of hope to be fully ripe, he informed his daughter with a ſignificant ſmile that he had ſent for her couſin to Powerſcourt upon buſineſs in which ſhe was materially concerned, he certainly thought that he was communicating welcome intelligence. Far different were the agonized feelings of Geraldine, feelings which her anxiety to ſave her elated father from the pangs of ſudden diſappointment could ſcarcely reſtrain. She
flew

flew to Lucy, and, throwing herſelf into her arms, conjured her by all their infantine tenderneſs, if ſhe ever loved, ever pitied her, to do ſomething to ſave her from the dreadful alternative of a deteſted marriage, or offending an almoſt adored father.

Lucy mingled her tears with Geraldine's with more than the common ſenſibility of friendſhip. She could recollect nothing but her mother's ſolemn adjuration, and ſhe repeated her arguments with fidelity; but the moment of ſtrong paſſion was unfavourable to cool conſideration. "O ceaſe, my deareſt girl!" interrupted Miſs Powerſcourt, "ceaſe to urge the only propoſal to which I cannot accede. Even your "mother, all prudent, all ſelf-poſſeſſed "as ſhe is, would ſtrongly reprobate ſo-"lemn perjury. Had this union not "been propoſed, my regard for lord

"Mon-

"Monteith ſhould never have induced
"me to have taken any ſtep contrary
"to my father's will, nor ſhould he
"have diſcovered that the ſacrifice I
"made to filial duty was at the expence
"of my happineſs. But to bind my-
"ſelf for ever to another, when my
"heart is irrevocably his; to ſhut out
"every hope that time might remove
"my father's reluctance; honour, de-
"licacy, affection, nay, even my eſteem
"for Henry Powerſcourt, all ſtrongly
"forbid ſuch an unhallowed bond!"

Lucy was quite a convert to theſe arguments; but when Geraldine again called upon her to ſuggeſt ſome plan of conduct that might obviate theſe threatened evils, the artleſs weeping girl could form no other ſcheme than that ſhe ſhould throw herſelf at ſir William's feet and own a pre-engagement. Miſs Powerſcourt ſeemed not to have ſuffi-

cient

cient courage for a diſcovery which ſhe apprehended muſt produce diſagreeable events; but while depreſſed and unreſolved, ſhe ſeemed firm in nothing but that ſhe would ultimately reject her couſin's hand. The important eclairciſſement came from another quarter.

I ſhall paſs over many unimportant converſations to give a fuller account of the interview in which ſir William unequivocally, and in ſure expectation of a joyful acceptance, informed his kinſman of his deſign to make him the heir of his fortunes, and the depoſitary of his daughter's happineſs. But when he expected to ſee the highly-favoured youth break out in a ſtrain of grateful rapture, (for even his phlegmatic temper expected rapturous acceptance when Geraldine was the gift,) how cruelly was he diſappointed to ſee his countenance betray diſtreſs almoſt bordering upon

upon defpair, and to hear him in grateful, refpectful, but decifive terms, reject the radiant, the alluring prize. Sir William ftood motionlefs with aftonifhment to fee the "cloud-capt tower" he had been fo many years erecting prove in one moment to be only "the bafelefs fabric of a vifion;" and as I conceive my readers muft be equally planet-ftruck, I cannot help afking them, in a tone of exultation, whether I have not attained the grand climax of improbability? whether the legends of modern romance, modern poetry, or the modern drama, can produce a fituation fo novel and ftriking?

That a prudent, diffident young man, who, without having abfolutely laid a plan to make his fortune, was anxioufly folicitous to be relieved from a dependance which he feverely felt; that fuch a one, I fay, without any preconcerted

defign

deſign upon lady Bridget Autumn's eſtate, or the jointure of the ducheſs dowager of Witherington, ſhould refuſe the young, lovely, faſcinating Geraldine, when offered to him by her father, with the immediate poſſeſſion of three thouſand a year, and a certain aſſurance of an additional five thouſand per annum on his death;—I think I have been too diffident in only challenging my contemporaries in the circle of the Belles Lettres to rival me in the non-natural: I might alſo call upon the *philoſophers* of the new ſchool, and aſk the illuſtrious ſophiſts if they can form a paradox more perfectly incomprehenſible.

But, notwithſtanding my paſſionate love of fame compels me to adopt the moſt faſhionable, that is, the certain method of obtaining it, I cannot quite conquer the common foible of old people, that of looking back to the

times

times I have ſeen, and thinking them ſomewhat better than the preſent days. Indeed now and then I am rude enough to conjecture that the modern Parnaſſus is ſeated very near that "windy ſea of land," which Milton names the Limbo of Vanity, the reſidence of

> "All th' unaccompliſh'd works of Nature's hand
> "Abortive, monſtrous, or unkindly mix'd."

Regretting that ſimple elegance and rational amuſement ſhould be ſacrificed to high-ſounding phraſes and inconceivable wonders, ſignifying nothing, I ſometimes invoke the ſhades of Addiſon, Goldſmith, and Fielding; and, after having contemplated the forms of nature or morality which their antiquated pages preſent, I in vain endeavour to be amuſed with ghoſts and dungeons, incident without character, or character without effect. Theſe laſt ſentences recal

cal my wandering pen, by ſuggeſting to me that criticiſm may be as jejune and irrelative as the novel or poem which it condemns; and that the ſatiriſt of the taſte and morals of others muſt from prudence avoid exhibiting any thing reprehenſible in her own.

Taught by that "warning voice" to ſhun the rock of digreſſion, I muſt inform my readers, that the abſurdity of my plan may be rather apparent than real. Henry Powerſcourt might have ſome private reaſons for his extraordinary conduct. He might have a pre-engagement; and no lover under twenty would heſitate to offer a few annual thouſands on the ſhrine of Cupid. He might be enamoured of academic ſhades, and think, like Shakeſpeare's Henry VI.

"Marriage! alas, my years are yet too young,
"And fitter is my ſtudy and my books:"

Or

Or the vivacity of Geraldine might intimidate him as much as Beatrice's did Benedict, and induce him to offer "to "go on an embaſſy to Preſter John or "the Antipodes, rather than encounter "that lady's tongue."—What his real reaſons were muſt not now be developed; but, knowing the pain of curioſity, I cannot help owning, notwithſtanding my uſual reſerve, that I know them, and that they ſhall be explained in their proper place.

The reader muſt remember that I have left ſir William in rather an awkward ſituation. Some little hope that there might be a mutual miſunderſtanding induced him to repeat the offer; and, in a tone that indicated not only ſurprize but diſpleaſure, he aſked Henry if this was what he meant to refuſe? The embarraſſed youth gave a heſitating "Yes," and turned aſide to conceal the ſtrong

emotion of his agitated heart. "You "are not ignorant, Henry," ſaid ſir William, "that my fortune is entirely "at my own diſpoſal, and that all your "inheritance is an eſtate of your fa- "ther's, ſomewhat under a hundred a "year."

"I know it, ſir," anſwered Henry in a voice ſcarcely audible; "I know too "how infinitely I am beholden to your "bounty, and that I could ſacrifice my "life to prove my gratitude."

"Pho! pho!" ſaid ſir William, "a "fiddle-ſtick about gratitude and ſuch "nonſenſe; talking about theſe things "is not to the purpoſe; I meant to "have been a greater friend to you than "I have been; but I ſuppoſe you have "ſome reaſons for your behaviour, and "ſo I ſhall only add that I wiſh you a "better offer."

He

He then left the room, while the afflicted Henry, wretched at the idea that he had offended the perſon whom of all others he moſt revered and eſteemed, ſunk upon a ſofa, and fell into a painful reverie on his paſt conduct. His motives appeared ſo laudable, that he could not upon retroſpection wiſh the deed undone; he only feared that his voice, his looks, his words, or his manner, had not ſufficiently indicated the deep veneration which he felt in his heart.

In a converſation which took place the ſame morning between ſir William and his daughter, the former animadverted on Henry's unaccountable conduct in terms more acrimonious than he had ever before uſed. As a proof of the uncommon ſweetneſs of Miſs Powerſcourt's diſpoſition, ſhe appeared not only to forgive the affront, but ſhe even pleaded

pleaded for the bold refuſer with all that enchanting eloquence by which ſhe had ever been accuſtomed to influence her father's mind.

"I cannot, my dear ſir," ſaid ſhe, "condemn Henry's behaviour; on the "contrary, I think it proceeded from "that inviolable regard for honour and "ſincerity which you tell me has been "from time immemorial the character-"iſtic of our family. A mean inte-"reſted perſon would have thought that "your predilection in his favour gave "him an abſolute right to treat me as he "pleaſed; he would never have conſi-"dered whether I was the wife he would "voluntarily have preferred. Looking "only at the greatneſs of my dowry, "he would at all times have ſilenced "the compunctions of his conſcience, "by remembering that I was obtruded "upon his choice, when perhaps his

" heart felt a ſecret preference for an-
" other."

While Miſs Powerſcourt ſpoke, her look, voice, and manner, were uncommonly beautiful and impreſſive. Sir William gazed upon her with inexpreſſible delight; and when ſhe ſtopped, he only obſerved, that he thought there were few young men in the kingdom who would not have been overjoyed at ſuch a propoſal.

" Parental partiality," reſumed Geraldine, " muſt not decide on ſuch an
" important point; but let not my dear-
" eſt father, through his fondneſs for
" me, ſwerve from that noble integrity
" which has ever been the rule of his
" actions. From motives of delicacy to
" myſelf I muſt entreat that the events
" of this morning may make no dif-
" ference in your opinion of Henry.
" Indeed I ſhould think that as the
" highly-

" highly-liberal plan you had formed in
" his favour is now frustrated, this is
" the properest time to give him the inde-
" pendence you design for him. Sup-
" pose you immediately resign the Me-
" rionethshire estate. It is but five hun-
" dred a year you know; and if such a
" defalcation in your revenue should any
" way derange your customary charities,
" permit me, my dear father, to surren-
" der part of that very ample allowance
" which you give me. It really is much
" more than I know how to spend; it
" only makes me thoughtless and extra-
" vagant; and I am sure that abridging
" it would be a good moral lesson."

" Speak no more, child, upon this sub-
" ject," replied sir William; " nobody
" shall say that I brought a young fel-
" low up, and then let him starve be-
" cause he was not willing to marry
" my daughter; but there is no neces-

" sity for choosing the very time of his
" disobliging me to make him inde-
" pendent, as you call it. I have been
" put out of humour this morning, and I
" will take a ride round my farm to
" get myself comfortable again. I
" don't see that Henry's staying here
" longer is of any use, and I shall tell
" him that he may as well set off for
" Oxford when I come home."

Henry was roused from his stupor by a letter from Geraldine, which I shall transcribe:

" To HENRY POWERSCOURT, Esq.

" Your conduct, my noble cousin,
" during the trying incidents of this
" morning, superadds to the esteem
" and confidence which I have ever
" felt for you, the indelible tie of fer-
" vent gratitude. If I ever appear to
" forget your generous behaviour, add
" to

" to the lift of thofe infamous women
" of antiquity whom you have often
" reprobated, the more infamous name
" of Geraldine Powerfcourt, who bafely
" neglected the difinterefted friend who
" rifked all his faireft hopes to alleviate
" her forrows.

" Be not grieved, my ever-refpected
" Henry, at the apprehenfion of my
" father's anger. It muft not, it fhall
" not continue. His own excellent
" heart will not permit the difappoint-
" ment of a favourite plan to infpire
" lafting refentment againft the worthy
" youth who is an honour to his name.
" Perhaps, under the prefent circum-
" ftances, it will be better for you not
" to meet, at leaft till he can fee you
" without too keenly regretting that
" you cannot be his fon. I have heard
" you exprefs a wifh to vifit Italy; does
" that wifh continue, or has it been

"supplanted by some other desire? Say,
"in what way can I prove that mine is
"not a mere wordy gratitude; write to
"me as soon as you get to Oxford, for
"I can taste no true satisfaction unless
"I hear that you are happy.

"GERALDINE POWERSCOURT."

I hope it will not be deemed an imputation on Mr. Powerscourt's fortitude, if I should affirm, that on reading this letter his eyes were observed to be suffused with tears. With a faltering voice he ordered his horses. He attempted to write a few lines, but his hand was too tremulous, and his thoughts too confused to perform the task. The destined heir of sir William Powerscourt, renouncing all those splendid prospects which had opened upon him, returned to the academic shades which, warm with the most sanguine hopes, he had left the week

week before. He returned poor in every worldly poſſeſſion, dejected, and diſmayed; but rich in integrity, rich in the noble conſciouſneſs of approving virtue.

CHAP. XI.

——Here, before Heaven,
I ratify this my rich gift. O Ferdinand!
Do not ſmile at me that I boaſt her off;
For thou wilt find ſhe will outſtrip all praiſe,
And make it halt behind her.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE earl of Monteith was too ardent a votary of Cupid, to hear with indifference of his rival's proceedings. On the firſt intelligence that Henry was arrived at Powerſcourt, his lordſhip's valet received orders to examine and clean the locks of his ſilver-mounted piſtols, and to have a ſufficient quantity of powder and ball ready at the ſhorteſt notice. [illegible]larmed for his lord's life, Beau[illegible] inſtantly informed lord W. of th[illegible] bloody preparation, who again prev[illegible] upon his young friend to wait patiently

patiently for the effect of Miss Powerscourt's evident predilection in his favour.

Meantime the "tall long-sided dame" whom Hudibras characterises as a "tattling gossip," having received some hint of what was really intended at Powerscourt-house, blazoned it with all her powers; and, knowing that the intelligence must be particularly interesting at W. park, she put her swiftest winged emissaries into motion. These, gentle reader, were not aërial sylphs, or "Iris gliding down her painted bow:" modern prose is severely restricted from the use of such ornamental machinery. I can only introduce a lame dowager of consummate prudence and known candour, who had her old horses driven ten miles through the dirt to wonder with lady W. that any young lady could reject lord Monteith, and accept Henry

Powerſcourt, and to reprobate the extravagant demand of eight hundred a year for pin money, on which the intended bride had poſitively inſiſted. Another of Fame's buſy meſſengers was a gentleman fox-hunter, a man of extreme caution and undoubted veracity, who affirmed at lord W.'s public dinner, that he had met two barriſters and a ſerjeant at law riding poſt to ſir William's that very day. On one of the company obſerving, that three lawyers conſulting upon a ſettlement was rather unuſual, ſquire Weſtern affirmed with an oath, that one of his neighbours told him ſir William would have it ſo: "Theſe lawyers," ſaid he, "are ſad "quarrelſome fellows, and if two of "them ſhould diſagree, I will have the "third ready to be umpire; for the "wedding ſhall take place next week." Nobody now could doubt his teſtimony, the

the words was ſo very like what ſir William would ſay.

When the gentlemen adjourned to the drawing-room, the buſy ſprite I have before alluded to had taken poſſeſſion of that goodly field, and inſtigated a lady, at the hazard of engroſſing too much of the converſation, to enumerate all the bride's paraphernalia. One part of the company indeed affirmed, that they were told Miſs Powerſcourt ſecretly diſapproved of the match; but three young ladies, influenced by the ſame ſupernatural agency, proteſted that they knew better. They were, they ſaid, her very intimate friends, and were entruſted by her with the ſecret of her attachment to her couſin, which had ſubſiſted from their earlieſt years. During theſe narratives, the countenance of Monteith varied from the crimſon glow of rage to the livid hue of jealouſy; and, as he

was not ſufficiently verſed in the ſcience of ſelf-command to conceal his ſtrong emotions, the ladies were all highly entertained with the idea that he really was very much in love ſtill; forgetting, or perhaps having never read in the fable, that what is ſport to one may be death to another.

It was only by repeated obſervations, that all thoſe reports could not be true, and that the lady's word deſerved confidence, that lord W. could prevail upon his noble gueſt to ſuſpend the execution of his ſanguinary deſigns. At this criſis the unexpected, the tranſporting intelligence arrived, that Henry was certainly gone in diſgrace from Powerſcourt; but neither the lame dowager, the cautious fox-hunter, the criticiſing lady, nor even the *intimate friends* of Geraldine, could tell why.

The

The ſtate of affairs, both at the park and at ſir William's, ſoon underwent a ſurpriſing revolution. The lovely Geraldine, with ſteps once more light as the wood-nymph's, flew to communicate to her dear Lucy the intelligence which her ſparkling eyes, and the ſmiles that played around her faſcinating face, had already anticipated. Lord Monteith had renewed his addreſſes in the moſt paſſionate but reſpectful terms; and Sir William, contraſting ſuch ſtrong attachment with Henry's cold refuſal, had declared, that as his own plans were fruſtrated, he ſhould have no longer any objection to his lordſhip, provided ſome peculiar conditions were granted, with which Monteith joyfully complied. "Felicitate me, Lucy," added Miſs Powerſcourt; "upon the happy "change in my ſituation. I ſcorn the "mean affectation of keeping a ge-"nerous

"nerous heart in fuſpenſe. I have
"owned to my father, that I regretted
"his rejection of lord Monteith. Nay,"
added ſhe, leaning her bluſhing face
on Miſs Evans's ſhoulder, "I have con-
"feſſed that my affections are irrevoca-
"bly fixed upon the moſt conſtant, the
"moſt generous of men."

I will truſt that the active imaginations of my readers will delineate all the ſcenes of joyous congratulation, courtſhip, and preparation, which intervened between ſir William's acceptance of lord Monteith's offers, and the nuptial ſolemnity; and will only premiſe, that, as the principal figures on the canvaſs were people of elevated rank and deeply in love, the execution muſt be maſterly. An enamoured earl muſt certainly expreſs his ſentiments in more dignified periods than an enamoured viſcount; and if this obſervation be ex-

tended through all the "privileged orders," my prudence in ſhrinking from the hazardous attempt of recording the loftier flights of heroic love is worthy of ſome credit; particularly in theſe times, when every noveliſt permits his plain Williams and Richards to addreſs their miſtreſſes in terms that would formerly have been allowed only to an Archduke or a Count Palatine, except indeed the hero were a profeſſed Knight-errant, to whom the uſe of extravagant hyperbole has belonged from time immemorial.

Let it then be ſuppoſed, that after the noble lover had many times repeated his injunctions to Phœbus to "gallop apace his fiery-footed ſteeds," and had chided creeping Time for not "ſpeeding on the lagging hours," the auſpicious morning at laſt arrived, and the lovely pair, attended by many of the neighbouring

bouring gentry, and a numerous cavalcade, composed of sir William's tenants, proceeded to the parish church, where Mr. Evans joined their hands, amid the acclamations of hundreds, whom the unrefined but liberal hospitality of the worthy baronet had assembled on this joyful occasion.

Though female delicacy would gladly have escaped the oppressive state of public celebration, yet Geraldine was determined not to oppose her father's known predilection for all those antiquated customs which were derived from the feudal barons, whom he gloried in imitating. Gratified in the object of her choice, lady Monteith presided with unaffected sweetness and polished grace at those festal entertainments by which sir William strove to diffuse on all around him the overflowing satisfaction of his own heart.

I shall

I ſhall here perhaps be aſked, how his general diſlike to lords and love-matches, his plans in favour of Henry, and his wiſhes to perpetuate his own name and family, could be ſo ſoon forgotten. This laſt objection is anſwered by obſerving, that a clauſe in the marriage-ſettlement ſecured the inheritance of ſir William's fortune to the ſecond ſon of this marriage, who was expreſsly enjoined to receive the name of his maternal grandfather; or, in caſe of no ſecond ſon, the eldeſt daughter was to convey the Powerſcourt honours to her huſband. A diſpoſition like ſir William's, though prone to purſue a favourite ſpeculation with eagerneſs, will not renounce every future good, becauſe its primary wiſh has proved impracticable, but will ſpeedily return to that harmonized tranquillity which beſt accords with its natural feelings. When the doating father

ther ſaw that lord Monteith beheld his Geraldine with nearly the ſame idolizing preference as he did himſelf, he forgot that he was a peer, and he almoſt became a convert to the opinion, that a love match was well enough now and then.

Beſide the clauſe already mentioned, the deed of ſettlement contained another of a very extraordinary nature. It was, that on lady Monteith's ſucceeding to her inheritance, two thouſand pounds a year ſhould be ſolely appropriated to her, that is to ſay, not merely the income, but the abſolute power of giving or bequeathing it to whomſoever ſhe choſe. Lord Monteith's lawyer ſtated this demand to be extremely adverſe to the intereſts of his noble client, whoſe whole fortune was entailed upon the iſſue of this marriage; and even ſir William thought that his dear girl was

a little

a little unaccountable, in aſking for a power injurious to the intereſts of her own children. The lady, however, perſiſted in the requeſt, which was indeed the only one ſhe urged; and the matter being referred to lord Monteith, he, with lover-like complacency, inſiſted that all oppoſition on the part of his counſel ſhould be immediately withdrawn.

It was alſo ſtipulated, that ſir William ſhould be gratified with the company of his daughter and ſon-in-law for three months every year at Powerſcourt. The good baronet, on propoſing this condition, explained the motives to lord Monteith: "I do not "doubt, my lord, but that as you will "ſoon have a pretty large concern in "theſe parts, you will be anxious to "get acquainted with the neighbour"hood, and to know the characters of "your

" your dependants. I am now, my
" lord, very old, and every thing muſt
" ſoon be your's and Geraldine's. It
" gives me pleaſure to think that I ſhall
" leave you a ſet of upright worthy te-
" nants; and I truſt you will act a fa-
" ther's part by them, as I and my an-
" ceſtors always have done. I will in-
" troduce them all to you before you
" leave us. Poor ſouls! they have been
" uſed to have their landlords live
" among them on free and ſociable
" terms, and it will grieve them not
" to ſee the chimnies of Powerſcourt
" ſmoke as they uſed to do. However,
" I ſhall not expect that your lordſhip
" can live here more than four months
" in the year when it comes to be your
" own; I know you have a ſeat in Par-
liament, and when very particular
buſineſs is going on, you muſt cer-
" tainly be in London; for the affairs of
" the

"the nation are of more confequence
"than the interefts of fifty or fixty
"country yeomen. You have a very
"fine caftle too of your own near Loch
"Lomond, falling quite to decay, I
"hear, your anceftors having neglected
"it for feveral years. That is a fad pity,
"I think: doubtlefs, my lord, you will
"wifh to go down there and fit it up
"again. Geraldine will be very happy
"to affift you in beautifying it, and
"making it a comfortable refidence."

It will not be very furprifing that fome local reflections fhould induce fir William to lay a particular ftrefs on the word *comfortable*. Lord Monteith, ftarting from a reverie, exclaimed, "O, un-"doubtedly!" Sir William, who difcovered that he had been totally abfent during his whole harangue, perceiving the object which had fixed his attention, fmiled,

ſmiled, and forgave him. Nor will my readers be inexorable, when I tell them that the object was the beautiful Geraldine, who, with her "looſe hair floating in the wind," unconſcious that ſhe attracted any obſervation, ſwept the ſoft ſtrings of her harp in a neighbouring alcove, and chaunted, with her melodious voice, the following air:

> Come, Cupid, with ambroſial flowers,
> Rear'd in thy own Idalian bowers,
> My nuptial wreath adorn;
> Here let the purple amaranth bloom,
> Mix'd with the lily's chaſte perfume,
> And roſe without a thorn.
>
> O! haſte, each claſſic ſymbol chooſe,
> The laurel ſacred to the Muſe
> Of elegance and taſte;
> With theſe thy Mother's myrtle bind,
> Beſt emblem of a placid mind,
> With gifts perennial grac'd!

I d

I do not ask thy frolic hand
To weave the perishable band
That fades on fashion's brow;
My constant soul a tie requires,
Firm as the virtue which inspires
And dignifies my vow.

Give me the mild persuasive art,
Which holds the captivated heart
In unregretted toils;
Shed thy own lustre o'er my face,
When beauty mourns each ravish'd grace,
And youth no longer smiles.

Perplexing doubts my bosom tear;
Oh! let me fan with vestal care
The Hymeneal fire;
Guard it from passion's wild extreme,
And bid its salutary beam
With life alone expire *!

Having

* Mrs. Prudentia is very sorry that she has not absolutely conformed to the opinion of the Reviewers, who bestowed such liberal praise upon her prose, by entirely banishing the vagrant Muse. She has a most unlucky knack of "hitching into rhyme;"

Having now gradually led my readers to that point where I at first rather abruptly introduced them, I ſhall endeavour to proceed ſtrait forward during the remainder of my narrative.

---

rhyme;" and when the bantlings are produced, ſhe had rather that they ſtuck on the top ſhelf of a book-caſe, than that they ſhould be immediately committed to the flames. With regard to their advice of publiſhing her poetical productions ſeparately, ſhe can only anſwer, that ſhe has repeatedly made the unfortunate experiment. Her bookſellers all agree in one ſentiment, "Poetry will not go off."

CHAP. XII.

As humorous as Winter, and as ſudden
As flaws congealed in the ſpring of day.
His temper, therefore, muſt be well obſerv'd.
Chide him for faults, but do it reverently.

SHAKESPEARE.

LORD MONTEITH was one of thoſe common characters which the world every day produces, and which a very little penetration will eaſily unravel. His abilities were not conſpicuous; and his application to the improvement of them had been as great as a rich heir, early become his own maſter, uſually beſtows. He poſſeſſed a great deal of good temper, and that open-hearted eaſy generoſity which always ſucceeds in ſecuring general good opinion. His paſſions were naturally very ſtrong; and, never having been taught the neceſſity

of reſtraining them, they were increaſed by continual gratification, till they ſomewhat reſembled the impetuous torrent. Nature intended him to be humane and beneficent; but a neglect of diſcipline and conſtant indulgence had introduced an indolent ſelfiſhneſs. Yet ſtill, if a good deed required no great exertion, or if an object in diſtreſs luckily preſented itſelf at a moment when he was diſengaged from any favourite purſuit, he would not only ſhew a noble liberality, but alſo enjoyed a noble pleaſure from the benevolent deed.

A character like lord Monteith's rather fitted its poſſeſſor to follow others, than to be a leader. Unhappily for him, his birth and fortune obtruded him into notice, and placed him in ſituations to which his natural talents were unequal. The ſplendor of his rank and his reputed munificence ſurrounded him

him with parafites; and the impetuofity of his temper prevented him from having any directing friend. Lord W., at whofe houfe he lately refided, was a man of the world, very folicitous that his noble gueft fhould form a proper matrimonial connection; but extending the idea of propriety no farther than to the fortune, the family, or perhaps the perfonal graces of the lady; and though the young earl, during his paroxyfms of love, added to thefe allurements every angelic quality, he did not accurately define what thofe angelic qualities really were. Such was the man whom the purblind god, in one of his capricious moments, felected to be the hufband of the beautiful, animated, intelligent Geraldine Powerfcourt; whofe feelings, exquifitely fufceptible, had been accuftomed to the regular tenor of gentle manners, uni-

form confiſtent goodneſs, and every fond indulgence and mild endearment that parental tenderneſs could beſtow.

The ſentiments with which the young couple approached the altar of Hymen were as diſſimilar as their characters. The bridegroom thought no further of the awful ceremony, than as it was the means of putting him in poſſeſſion of an elegant and beautiful woman, upon whoſe account he had felt a great deal of uneaſineſs. He ſuppoſed that this event would of courſe greatly increaſe his ſtock of happineſs; but as to any abridgment of his former pleaſures, or any ſerious duties impoſed by the character of a huſband, he had not the leaſt idea of ſuch diſagreeable reſtrictions. He was, indeed, firmly of opinion, that inclination would in future ſtrongly attach him to home, and that he ſhould find the ſociety of his beloved "a perpetual

petual fountain of domeſtic ſweets;" but ſhould that expectation be diſappointed, (and ſome of his married friends had complained that they had been taken-in on a ſimilar occaſion,) would any body pretend to ſay that he had no right to make himſelf as comfortable as was in his power? He had already a fine houſe, elegant carriages, and a numerous retinue; he was very ſeldom at home, to be ſure, but he believed that the houſekeeper and the ſteward went on very well; and ſhould he (which was ſcarcely poſſible) find no more attractions in his own fire-ſide when graced by the preſence of a charming wife, he ſaw nothing in the marriage ceremony which forbade his making himſelf happy elſewhere.

The more correct principles and refined imagination of lady Monteith taught her to conſider the man whom

ſhe vowed to love, honour, and obey, as the partner of all her joys and ſorrows, the lord of her deſtiny, the guardian of her character, and the guide of her conduct. Conſcious that death alone could diſſolve the ſolemn bond into which ſhe had juſt entered, her moſt anxious wiſhes were pointed to one end, that of being for ever amiable in her huſband's eyes. She determined to ſtudy his diſpoſition with the moſt aſſiduous care, to comply with his peculiarities, and by imperceptible, becauſe gentle, means, gradually to inſpire that delicacy of taſte and ſentiment which even her partial judgment diſcovered to be wanting in his character. Had her obſervations been more profound, ſhade after ſhade muſt have appeared; yet, perhaps, had ſhe even ſeen the whole portrait in its true colours, her ſtrong predilection, and the ſanguine hopes which

which inexperienced youth (and I muſt add youthful vanity too) had tempted her to form of being able to make a complete revolution in his character, would have encouraged her to attempt the hazardous experiment. She never reflected, that the tender indulgence to which ſhe had been accuſtomed muſt render the perpetual renunciation of her own deſires a painful taſk; nor was her experience ſufficient to teach her, that the refinements which ſhe meant to introduce, like delicate exotics, could only flouriſh in a congenial ſoil.

The firſt inſtance that the bridegroom gave of that habitual ſelf-indulgence, and diſregard to the wiſhes of others, which might be ſaid to be the predominant feature in his mind, was an impatience to leave Powerſcourt long before ſir William had finiſhed half his plans of feſtal glee. His lordſhip had, with vi-

ſible *ennui*, endured the tedioufneſs of a public day, and given ſuch half-civil anſwers to the exclamation of "I heartily wiſh you joy, my lord!" which burſt upon him from every quarter, as to excite a doubt in the congratulators, whether he really was or was not glad that he was married. At dinner, he was only amuſed by obſerving the indiſcriminating appetites of country gentlemen; and when the cloth was removed, as he found himſelf the object of general attention, he determined to give no vexatious preference; and therefore confining all conſideration to his own reveries, he continued drawing lines upon the table with the madeira or claret, and proceeded no further in the way of diſcourſe than by a hum or a ſmile. While his right-hand neighbour was deſcribing the beſt method of improving land, his left explained

plained the advantages of inland navigation, and the gentleman oppofite addreffed to him a long narrative explanatory of the difficulties attending a lawfuit which had been awarded to him at the laft Caernarvon affizes. Their manner was verbofe, and they talked all together: his lordfhip, therefore, concluded that they faid nothing worthy of attention, and that the chagrin he felt arofe from the want of fuperior fociety.

He feized the firft opportunity of withdrawing from the company to the countefs's dreffing-room, and on entering flung himfelf upon a fofa, with fo loud a yawn as to alarm her ladyfhip and Mifs Evans with ferious apprehenfions that he was taken ill. "Are not "you well?" exclaimed the former with tender anxiety. "It is impoffible to "be well among fuch boors," returned his lordfhip. "I have been talk'd-at

"all the afternoon, and cannot for my
"soul remember one single sentence
"that has been uttered. I am deter-
"mined to go to London the first op-
"portunity: living here three months
"would be the death of me. I protest,
"my charming Geraldine, that you put
"me in mind of a rose growing in the
"middle of a wilderness."

Lady Monteith could scarcely enjoy a compliment which conveyed such strong contempt for what she had ever been accustomed to view with affectionate regard. She smothered a sigh, and assumed a faint smile. But the smile and the sigh were alike disregarded. Her lord's attention was now engrossed by a favourite spaniel; with that he amused himself for a few moments, and then dropped asleep upon the sofa.

Another incident a few days after this displayed his humour in a still stronger light.

light. Sir Ralph and lady Morgan ſent an invitation in form, requeſting the honour of the bride and bridegroom's company at their ſeat to a dinner and a ball given in honour of their nuptials. The invitation was written on an elegant card, decorated by her ladyſhip's own pencil with Lilliputian Cupids lighting their tiny torches. Twenty years ago the Morgans were people in high life, and even the gallant Monteith would not then have bluſhed to have appeared at her ladyſhip's parties; but twenty years are ſufficient to annihilate mighty empires, and muſt unqueſtionably cauſe great revolutions in a private family. Juſt before his affairs were irretrievable, ſir Ralph diſcovered, that to be one of the very firſt people is a preliminary ſtep to becoming nobody; and his lady reflected on the danger of coquetry and diſſipation before the laſt

falſe ſtep had irretrievably ruined her character. They had ſufficient good ſenſe to reſolve on mutual amendment; plans of retirement and œconomy were immediately adopted, and regular perſeverance in theſe ſalutary meaſures had enabled them to reſume their old family ſplendor a little before lady Monteith's marriage. Certainly at this period nobody knew the Morgans; and her ladyſhip's knowledge of the faſhionable world was ſo antedated, that the very card ſhe intended ſhould announce her indiſputable claim to ſuperior elegance, convinced lord Monteith that ſhe muſt be a mere *fal lal*, and that the viſit would prove a *bore*: as a natural conſequence, he determined not to go.

On the day appointed, the counteſs, attired in all her bridal ſplendor, in compliment to her father's old friend, waited for her lord's approach to lead her to

her

her chariot. Her lord appeared in his morning difhabille, and in a half-whifper announced his refolution not to go. " I hate ftate vifits," faid he, " and I " never could endure country balls in all " my life."—" But this," returned the countefs, raifing her pleading eyes, "is ab- " folutely given in compliment to us."— " Never mind, never mind," continued his lordfhip hurrying her to the carriage, and at the fame time holding a handker- chief to his mouth: " You can make " an apology You fee I have got a " terrible tooth-ach; upon my foul, I " would not go for a thoufand pounds. " Come, your father waits; you will " be too late." At thefe words he lifted her into the chaife, and then, with the voice of one in extreme pain, ex- claimed, " Beft compliments—forry I " can't do myfelf the honour—make

" hafte,

"haſte, my love; if you are too late, I "ſhall be miſerable."

Lady Monteith had now, for the firſt time in her life, the painful taſk of apologizing for what ſhe conceived to be a moral impropriety in the conduct of a perſon whom ſhe tenderly loved. Unuſed to diſguiſe, ſhe faltered in her excuſes, which, indeed, ſeemed rather to make the affair worſe than to improve it. She found every thing at the Morgans in ſtate array; the entertainment was conducted with great decorum; and nothing but the lamented abſence of lord Monteith ſeemed to render deficient the éclat of the ſcene. To compenſate for the bridegroom's rudeneſs, the bride thought it her duty to exert herſelf with greater aſſiduity; but her attentions were ungraceful, her wit forced, and her laughter artificial. After having endured a moſt irkſome

evening,

evening, ſhe returned home, and found that the noble invalid had completely baniſhed his tooth ach and his chagrin, by witneſſing the amuſements of an aſs-race.

Lady Monteith liſtened with ſeeming intereſt to the ludicrous accidents to which ruſtic competition had given riſe, and then ventured upon a gentle expoſtulation on his abſenting himſelf from a ſcene which muſt have afforded him ſuperior pleaſure. Her deſcription of the entertainment and the company made his lordſhip a convert to her opinion, and, unſolicited, he ſet off the next morning to the Morgans, to make a perſonal apology for his abſence. He found them ſo unexpectedly agreeable, that on a ſlight invitation he ſpent the day with them, and returned home, not aſhamed of his own caprice, but vexed that he had miſſed the pleaſanteſt party

that

that had occurred ſince his reſidence in Caernarvonſhire. Not that he was any way to blame; his earlieſt recollection did not furniſh him with one inſtance of his having acted wrong; the fault lay entirely in the unlucky Cupids and the painted card.

The ſeaſon of the year of which I am now treating was May, a period when the country holds out its pleaſures only to the ſtudious, the induſtrious, and the contented. It is of all times the moſt inſipid to the ſportſman, who, being deprived of all chance of breaking his neck or blowing out his brains, is obliged to hurry up to town to avoid the puerility of gathering primroſes, and liſtening to the cawing of rooks. Lord Monteith had already found his nuptial felicity leſs perfect than his expectations had conceived; but this, for the reaſons I have above ſtated, could not be from

from any error in his own behaviour, or any impropriety in his own judgment: nor did it proceed from the imperfections of his adorable Geraldine, who proved to be the angelic creature he had before suppofed her: it was all owing to the odious country, to fir William's odd ways, and to the *twaddling* people whom he suffered to vifit him. In London, he fhould undoubtedly enjoy the expected paradife; there his lovely girl muft attract univerfal admiration; he fhould breathe another air, enjoy a different fociety, receive the congratulations of all his own friends; in fhort, he muft fet off for town immediately.

When, with many polite expreffions of regret for being obliged to fhorten his vifit at Powerfcourt, lord Monteith firft acquainted fir William with the neceffity of his going up to town, the latter difcovered great furprife that he fhould choofe

choofe to go to that difagreeable place juft when parliament was fo near breaking up, and that there was no more national bufinefs of importance to fettle. "This," faid he, "feems to be the "very time that you fhould take a "trip to Scotland, to examine the plans "of your architects, to fet them to "work, and to get the foil fmooth and "ready to plant next autumn. I am "afraid, my lord, you are not natu- "rally fond of a country life; but it is "only becaufe you have never been "ufed to it. Get acquainted with your "neighbours; confider the intereft "which you have in the fcenes around "you; remember how much good you "may do in a fpot where you reign "like a little king, compared to what "you can do in London, and you will "foon be as fond of Monteith as I am "of Powerfcourt."

The

The manner in which ſir William uttered theſe expreſſions was too much marked by dignified benevolence to admit of ridicule; and the unfortunate lord would have been compelled to give up his London journey from the mere want of arguments to defend its expediency, had not accident favoured him with a convenient reaſon for putting his deſigns in execution, which even ſir William allowed to be indiſputable.

CHAP. XIII.

So mourn'd the dame of Ephefus her love.
SHAKESPEARE.

On the marriage of lord Monteith, an exprefs was difpatched to Kinloch caftle, to inform lady Arabella Macdonald and lady Madelina Frazer of the joyful event. The meffenger on his arrival found the caftle attired in the moft fombrous weeds of woe, owing to the death of its *oftenfible* mafter, fir Simon Frazer, who, after having exifted for feveral years in a ftate of complete inanity, expired at the patriarchal age of ninety-two, to the great grief of his inconfolable confort.

As lady Madelina was too much abforbed in woe publicly to take an active part in the concerns of the family, the difpatches were opened by lady Arabella,

who

who acted as miſtreſs during the ſecluſion of her aunt. She read her brother's account of his marriage to the moſt excellent and beautiful of women, and, after caſting a ſide glance at the chimney-glaſs which reflected her own figure, ſhe proceeded to open a letter from her new ſiſter, which expreſſed a hope that the endearing tie of friendſhip would ſoon be added to that of kindred; but what appeared to the reader to be the moſt ſignificant part of the epiſtle was that where lady Monteith added a preſſing invitation to their houſe in London, and an aſſurance that ſhe ſhould rejoice in the opportunity of exerting all her abilities to promote the happineſs of any of her lord's friends.

The general etiquette of Kinloch caſtle had eſtabliſhed a rule of decorum which extended to the moſt trivial occurrences. Every motion was to be

grave

grave and conſequential; and a run could only be juſtified by one wing of the houſe being on fire, or by the appearance of an enemy on the coaſt. So ſtrict were theſe injunctions, that lady Madelina herſelf could not diſpenſe with them even upon the affecting incident of ſir Simon's death; for, on being informed, that if ſhe wiſhed to ſee him alive ſhe muſt come immediately, ſhe roſe with her uſual majeſty, and, throwing her train into its proper graceful folds, moved with ſlow and ſtately ſteps to the door of the apartment, where ſhe found, to her deep regret, that ſhe was come too late; a circumſtance the more to be lamented, as he went off in a fit, and had nobody with him but his old valet, who was lame with the rheumatiſm. Theſe obſervations will more clearly point out the groſs impropriety of lady Arabella's conduct, who with a

joyful exclamation of "O! my brother "is married, and I will go to Lon- "don," set off full speed to her aunt's apartment.

The sorrows of that lady, though of too deep a cast to admit more than one narrow stripe of daylight, were not so wholly sublime, as not to require now and then a few adventitious supports. The room in which sir Simon lay in state was contiguous to her own. She visited it every day, and was most sedulously exact in having the emblazonment completed in the highest style of heraldry. In a remote country, where few events occur to excite the attention of the curious, a feudal laird lying in state in his own castle was an agreeable novelty; and as the relict was not averse to the exhibition, sir Simon became a much more interesting object after he was dead, than ever he had been when alive.

alive. All who ſaw, by repeating what they had ſeen, excited the attention of others. Mutes were ſtanding all the way up the ſtairs; all the ſtate apartments were hung with black tapers as big as men; plumes of feathers as large as thoſe of Otranto, and eſcutcheons and atchievements, were placed at every corner. Several of the lady-viſitants, after having ſeen all theſe aſtoniſhing things, pleaded the rights of friendſhip, and entreated that their ſtrong deſire of combating lady Madelina's extreme grief might wave the rules of *etiquette*, and, after a little reluctance, they were admitted into her apartment. She *generally* fainted upon receiving company, though *ſometimes*, if ſhe found herſelf exhauſted, ſhe only exhibited a flood of tears, and called upon the dear ſhade of her lamented lord. They *generally* reaſoned her into a ſtate of calmneſs

and

and refignation; and *fometimes*, if the vifitants were Frazers and only the wives or daughters of younger brothers, they fat down to a confolatory pool at quadrille. But even here her ladyfhip's fentimental tendernefs was vifible; for fhe could only be brought to play at that game from a recollection "that "poor dear fir Simon, when he was "quite himfelf, was remarkably partial "to holding a lone-hand."

It was at fuch a time, and when lady Madelina was engaged with fuch a party, that lady Arabella, forgetting her uncle's death and her aunt's melancholy, rufhed into the room, health on her cheek, joy in her eye, and the Monteith packet in her hand, calling out rather too loudly, "My brother is married to a "Mifs Powerfcourt, and has afked me "to come to London." The affecting word *marriage* flung poor lady Ma-

delina into hyſterics, to which indeed the ſudden entrance and loud exclamation had previouſly contributed. On her recovery another ſource of anxiety was ſtarted. Who were the Powerſcourts? What alliances had they formed? Had any body ever heard of the family before? Luckily, a very ſkilful genealogiſt was preſent, whoſe information entirely obviated all anxiety upon the ſcore of degradation; and her ladyſhip became tolerably compoſed. It was now declared to be the univerſal opinion, that ſhe had indulged her melancholy quite long enough; that nothing was ſo good for bad ſpirits as a journey; and that it would be quite kind and condeſcending in her to pay a viſit to the young couple. Her ladyſhip for ſome time ſtrongly reſiſted the propoſal; proteſted that her intentions were ſoon to follow ſir Simon, whoſe

ghoſt

ghoſt ſhe was ſure ſtill waited for her, and to die upon the very ſpot which contained his ſacred remains. It ſeemed to be doubtful to the lady-comforters, whether ſir Simon had not had enough of his lady's company, for they denied the fact about the ghoſt; and at laſt convinced her, that it was exceedingly wicked in a perſon of her age to talk of dying. After much diffuſe argument, it was agreed that the interment ſhould take place a fortnight ſooner than was intended; and that when the eſcutcheons and atchievements had been properly arranged, lady Madelina and her niece ſhould prepare for their London journey. The latter cloſed the converſation by obſerving, that theſe were the only agreeable ſounds ſhe had heard ſince her arrival in Scotland.

While lady Arabella ſpeeded the joyous preparation, and indulged all the

hopes of future pleafures and triumphs which youthful confidence, aided by her early recollection, could fupply, lady Monteith took leave of Powerfcourt with far different fentiments. The one, averting her eyes from the detefted walls of Kinloch with an ardent wifh never more to behold what fhe called a bury-ing place for the living, could only be interefted by fubjects remotely con-nected with dear, dear London: the latter vifited every fpot which the amufe-ments of her youth had endeared, and took leave of every acquaintance, do-meftic, and friend, with the foft regret of remembered kindnefs. Next to thofe fentiments which her ever-revered and beloved father excited, her feparation from the Evans's called forth the moft lively emotions. It was at firft her in-tention to have requefted that Lucy might accompany her to town; but, had not

not the propofed vifit of her lord's relations induced her to poftpone that defire till fhe could have been fully at liberty to enjoy the unreftrained pleafure of her fociety, the indifpofition of Mrs. Evans would have fruftrated the fcheme. That excellent woman was now confined to her chamber by the increafe of a diforder under which fhe had laboured for many years; and though her fituation by no means excluded hope, her tender domeftic daughter could feldom fteal an hour from the pleafingly painful tafk of attending her, to breathe her fond wifhes and fonder adieus to that deareft friend from whom fhe was now for the firft time in her life going to be feparated.

CHAP. XIV

Lighter than air, Hope's ſummer-viſions die,
If but a fleeting cloud obſcure the ſky;
If but a beam of ſober Reaſon play,
Lo, Fancy's fairy froſt-work melts away!
But can the wiles of art, the graſp of power,
Snatch the rich relics of a well-ſpent hour?
PLEASURES OF MEMORY.

THE young counteſs, waving every form of ſtate which might have proved inconvenient in a ſick family, walked down to the parſonage, to bid farewell to her maternal friend, as ſhe conſtantly ſtyled the reſpectable ſufferer. She came juſt at the time when Mrs. Evans was going to riſe, and, claiming admittance with the privilege of long-eſtabliſhed intimacy, employed herſelf in airing the good lady's ſhawl; while Lucy was buſily engaged in aſſiſting her mother

to

to drefs, and in fixing her eafy chair in a proper fituation. Mrs. Evans looked at her noble gueft with a tender fmile. "I perceive, my deareft lady Monteith," faid fhe, "that there is no alteration in "your character. Your goodnefs and "amiable vivacity has fuffered no di-"minution from the referve of rank "or the etiquette of dignity; and fee "the effect it has upon us. We can "confider you in no other light than "that of our old friend. I admit you "to a fick chamber, and treat you with "a little groaning, while Lucy finds "you fome employment, as if you "were ftill the playful Geraldine whom "I had ufed alternately to correct and "idolize. Do you remember dreffing "my cat in a blue jacket and trowfers, "teaching it to walk upright, and pro-"tefting that it was the very image of "your coufin Henry; and afterwards,

" when you ſaw him crying at the com-
" pariſon; giving him the new gold
" watch your father had juſt bought
" you, by way of conſolation?"

" I have many unatoned ſins to an-
" ſwer for to Henry Powerſcourt," ſaid
lady Monteith gravely, " worſe than
" tearing his beſt Virgil to paper my
" baby-houſe, or cauſing the deſtruction
" of his plaiſter of Paris buſts by dreſ-
" ſing them in high crowned hats and
" hooped petticoats to frighten the
" houſe-maids. I have blaſted his faireſt
" proſpects; but I have not forgot that
" I owe him an indelible debt of grati-
" tude. I have juſt received from him
" an affecting congratulation. He
" writes in a diſpirited ſtyle, and com-
" plains of a low fever; but his wiſhes
" for my happineſs are breathed in ſuch
" a ſtrong and affectionate manner,
" that while I read his letter I felt—I
know

"know not what I felt, unleſs it were
"a wiſh that I had the power of making
"him as happy as he deſerves."

During lady Monteith's ſpeech Miſs Evans was employed in mixing her mother's medicine. Her hands appeared to tremble, ſhe dropped the cup, and, while apologizing for her awkwardneſs, burſt into tears. "Your cloſe confine-
"ment makes you nervous, my love,"
ſaid Mrs. Evans. "Go into the gar-
"den, and water your little nurſlings;
"your friend will chat with me while
"you are gone; and I felt ſo eaſy this
"morning, that I intended to omit the
"draught."

Lucy inſtantly obeyed. Her mother's eyes followed her to the door; they were then lifted to Heaven, as if enforcing a ſilent ejaculation, and finally ſettled upon lady Monteith with a look of ſupplicating earneſtneſs.

Silence enfued for a few moments, which Mrs. Evans hefitatingly interrupted: "Till you are a mother, my "dear madam, (faid fhe,) you cannot "know the full force of a mother's "fears. Mine, perhaps, are exagge-"rated by my prefent weaknefs. It "ftrikes me, that my dear girl's de-"jection is even greater than my in-"difpofition, or your leaving us, could "juftify. While I have any hopes of "recovery, I conceive myfelf obliged to "avoid awakening her ftrong apprehen-"fions upon my account; and I believe "fhe is not aware that my prefent ill-"nefs is attended with fymptoms of a "more ferious nature than appeared in "any former attack. If my conftitu-"tion fhould prove weaker than my "difeafe," continued fhe, with a ftill more faltering voice, "I fhall leave "her to the protection of one of the

"beft-

" beſt of fathers; but men cannot ſo
" well penetrate into the female heart,
" they cannot treat our little peculiari-
" ties ſo delicately as one of our own
" ſex. It would lighten my mind of
" many cares could I diſcover whether
" my child has any ſecret unhappineſs;
" even if it ſhould prove ſuch as I could
" not remove, I could at leaſt," wiping
the tear that would no longer be ſup-
preſſed, " give her a mother's laſt legacy
" of advice and conſolation."

Lady Monteith underſtood this ap-
peal, and prevented further inquiry by
immediately replying, " You think, per-
" haps, that my deareſt Lucy may have
" entruſted me with ſome ſecrets which
" ſhe has not revealed to you; but I do
" aſſure you, if her innocent heart ever
" formed any wiſh or attachment with
" which you are unacquainted, her de-
" licacy would ever prevent her from

" giving me the confidence which ſhe
" denied to her juſtly venerated mother.
" It is only from ſuch incidents as have
" juſt occurred, that I have gained a
" tranſitory inſight reſpecting what paſſes
" in her mind; and perhaps my late ex-
" perience may have made me an accu-
" rate obſerver."

" Do you mean her behaviour on
" dropping my medicine?" inquired
Mrs. Evans: " I ſaw nothing in that,
" except that ſhe was diſpirited and
" agitated."

" You forget then," obſerved the
counteſs, " that Henry Powerſcourt was
" the ſubject of our converſation."

A thouſand circumſtances crowded at
this inſtant into Mrs. Evans's mind,
which confirmed the ſagacity of her la-
dyſhip's inference; but though the ac-
knowledged merit of the object leſſened
the pain of the diſcovery, the tender
mother

mother could not, without apprehenſive terror, be convinced, that love had "paled the roſes on her daughter's cheek."

"I know of no one," ſaid ſhe, "to "whom I could with greater confidence "entruſt my darling's happineſs; yet "ſo many croſs accidents occur to blaſt "our faireſt ſchemes, that I own I "wiſh her heart had proved leſs ſuſ-"ceptible. I do, however, hope that "ſhe is not a volunteer in her affections. "You can, my dear lady Monteith, "pardon my ſolicitude; but can you "tell me whether Henry entertains re-"ciprocal ſentiments?"

Her ladyſhip appeared embarraſſed by this inquiry. "I think," ſaid ſhe, "at preſent—I mean—I can hardly "explain myſelf—Henry is too much "attached to his ſtudies and retire-"ment; but I hope his chagrin—

"I mean

" I mean his habits of feclufion, will
" wear off. His fituation has been
" very peculiar. It has hardly given
" fair play to his affections. I truft he
" will very foon be made independent;
" I know he poffeffes great fenfibility,
" and I am perfuaded that when his
" circumftances are perfectly eafy, when
" he feels that he is his own mafter, if
" opportunities for frequent interviews
" fhould occur, our Lucy's mild excel-
" lencies muft ftrike him in the moft
" forcible manner. I know her gene-
" ral character has attracted his warm
" approbation."

Another tear ftole from Mrs. Evans's eyes. " I fee," faid fhe, " my poor
" girl has woven a net which will fa-
" tally entangle her peace of mind during
" the happieft hours of youth."

" No," faid lady Monteith, with energy; " if my friendfhip can break
" this

" this fatal web, my Lucy ſhall never
" be unhappy. Nothing in my power
" ſhall be omitted to forward the union
" of two hearts that ſeem formed in the
" ſame mould. But if Henry, contrary
" to my expectations, ſhould never
" ſhow that partiality for my ſweet
" friend which her excellence deſerves,
" even Henry is not worthy of her,
" and I will aſſiſt her naturally ſtrong
" ſenſe and refined delicacy in conquer-
" ing an ill-placed attachment. I will
" keep her ſecret with religious care:
" I will ſeize the firſt opportunity to
" have the dear girl with me; I will
" endeavour to fathom Henry's heart,
" and, without oſtentatious eagerneſs,
" will ſet her merits as ſtrongly in his
" view as propriety and decorum will
" admit. If all ſhould fail of the de-
" ſired effect, ſhe never ſhall be left to
" muſe over her griefs in ſolitude. I
" will

" will amuſe and conſole her, nor ſhall
" ſhe ever feel a ſorrow which it is in
" my power to remove."

Mrs. Evans thanked the counteſs for theſe generous intentions, yet ſighed at the fear of their being impracticable. The return of her daughter neceſſarily gave a check to the converſation, which now turned to the ſubject of lady Monteith's expected viſitants. Her lord had pointed out to her the ſingularities of lady Madelina's character; but his only obſervation on his ſiſter was, that ſhe was the prettieſt creature he had ever ſeen, and that ſhe fluttered up and down the caſtle like a bird in a cage. " I expect," ſaid Geraldine, " that I
" ſhall be much captivated by the fair
" recluſe, whoſe behaviour at returning
" into the world after a long eſtrange-
" ment muſt be exceedingly intereſting
" and natural. My lord has her pic-
" ture.

" ture. It exhibits lovelinefs perfoni-
" fied; but it was drawn previous to
" her leaving England; the character of
" the girl therefore is moft predominant.
" I fhould name it untaught nature."

" And what traits," inquired Mrs. Evans, " do you fuppofe have been
" added by her refidence in the wilds
" of Scotland?"

" O, an infinitude!" replied the animated Geraldine, anxious to divert Lucy's dejection, which the morning exercife had not quite removed. " As
" Lady Madelina was uncommonly fe-
" vere, her pupil muft be the effence
" of complying fweetnefs. As fhe was
" illiberal, proud, and referved,—gentle
" Candour, yielding humility, and frank
" generofity, muft mark the mind of a
" young woman who has had fo many
" opportunities of obferving the oppo-
" fite odious faults."

" Do

"Do young women always obſerve "faults, and ſhun thoſe they diſcover?" demanded Mrs. Evans.

"No—only a gifted few, and prin-"cipally my Lucy and myſelf. I ſee, "my dear Mrs. Evans, you are going, "as uſual, to cenſure my propenſity "for determining characters from a mere "outline, and condemning or admiring "in the groſs. I have often laboured "hard to convince you, that this fa-"culty is one of the peculiar gifts of "nature, and that though *you* muſt "judge from experience and conſidera-"tion, *I* may draw as clear inferences "from an intuitive art of gueſſing. "Ah! I ſee you ſtill ſhake your head "incredulouſly; but Lucy ſhall be my "evidence. Do not I find out people "wonderfully ſoon, Lucy? Am not I "completely miſtreſs of their characters "and propenſities before you can have

"adjuſted

" adjuſted the propriety of their head-
" dreſs ?"

Lucy with a ſmile acknowledged her friend's ſuperior quickneſs; but added, " You forget one little circumſtance.
" It has frequently coſt you the trouble
" of a walk to the parſonage to ſay,
" O Lucy! I was quite wrong in my
" opinion of Mr. or Mrs. Such-a-one.
" I hope you have not mentioned what
" I thought of them."

" You are the ſevereſt ſatiriſt that I
" know," ſaid her ladyſhip; " but upon
" this occaſion I am ſure I ſhall never
" plead guilty. You and Arabella ſhall
" meet; and if you once pronounce
" me right, your dear mother will be
" eaſily led to think me in future in-
" fallible. But," continued ſhe, glancing her eye upon her watch, with a painful conſcioufneſs that the moment of ſeparation was near, " I have a fa-

" vour

" vour to aſk. I know that you and Mr.
" Evans object to the introducing this
" dear girl to ſcenes above her fortune;
' I know too that you are tenacious of
" her valuable ſociety; yet remember
" our early endearments, and ſpare her
" to me as ſoon as the engagements into
" which I am now thrown will permit
" me to claim her." Mrs. Evans, with
a dejected look, anſwered that her father
ſhould decide.

Lady Monteith felt the ſignificance of
this anſwer, and expreſſed her ſenſe of
it by dropping a tear upon Mrs. Evans's
hand, which ſhe at that moment preſſed
to her lips. " Dear, amiable, ſecond
" daughter," ſaid the good woman,
" my anxious wiſhes, my fondeſt affections,
" follow you into that thorny
" and intricate path which you are now
" going to tread. I underſtand enough
" of the great world to know that a
" cha-

" character like yours must attract ob-
" servation, illiberality, and envy. Your
" desire to please will be called vanity;
" your sprightliness, levity; your fine
" accomplishments, an invidious affect-
" ation of superiority. Through this
" dangerous trial, remember, innocence
" alone will not support you, and sen-
" sibility will betray you. Keep in
" mind my oft-repeated maxims, that
" no human character can be per-
" fect, and that it is dangerous to our
" peace to contemplate with too steady
" an eye the failings of those with whom
" we are intimately connected."

" I will remember all you say to me,
" and all I have said to you," resumed
the amiable bride. " I will frankly
" own, that my inexperienced heart
" flutters at the idea of the pleasures
" and the distinctions which await me.
" I shall have many trials, perhaps many
" ene-

"enemies; but where ſhall I find friends "to whom I may ſo ſafely diſcloſe all "my heart, as I do to my dear Mrs. "Evans and to my Lucy?"

"Make your huſband your friend; "endeavour to gain his confidence, "and beware of forming dangerous in- "timacies, unſanctioned by experience, "which may tend to leſſen your at- "tachment to him. Strive to exalt the "preference your charms have excited "into firm eſteem; and if you ſhould "not at firſt ſucceed, or not ſo com- "pletely as you wiſh, do not ſink into "dejection. Remember, time will over- "come every difficulty, and patience "will ſoften every ſorrow."

Miſs Evans, who had left the room during the preceding ſpeech, now haſtily re-entered. "I have brought you," ſaid ſhe, "my ever dear Geraldine, one other "little keep-ſake." Lady Monteith,

opening the paper, found a purſe, which ſhe remembered her friend had been anxious to finiſh with the moſt perfect neatneſs.

"I cannot take it," replied the counteſs; "I know that when you "netted it, you ſaid you meant it for "Henry Powerſcourt."

"He wants none of my purſes; you "ſhall have it, for you will value it "moſt."

"But if you have promiſed it my "love," obſerved Mrs. Evans.

"No—he never knew my intention, "and never ſhall."

"He is infinitely more careful of his "valuables than I am," reſumed the counteſs, mingling a ſmile with her tears; "You have given me ſo many nice "things already, and I am ſuch a ran-"dom creature—if I ſhould loſe it"—

"Though

" Though you are going to be very
" happy, I am certain *you* would not
" lose my present without sincere pain.
" You will never forget me, Geraldine;
" you will often write to me; and if I
" should not be punctual in my replies,
" you will never call it neglect." The
friends wept a moment in each other's
arms; lady Monteith's eyes asked her
Lucy to accompany her part of the way
to the manor; but as the latter made
no offer of that kind, she forbore to
name her request. Once more she re-
peated her assurances of inviolable re-
gard, and they parted.

I have gratified my own taste by en-
tering into a diffuse description of this
interview. Perhaps it was in no way
more extraordinary than common life
often affords. They who, disdaining
the softer touches of the mental pencil,
only enjoy the bold design which
sketches

ſketches the wildeſt ſtorm of the paſ-ſions, where the ſun of reaſon never beams, and where diſcretion never con-trols the raging elements, will paſs over the unintereſting page that de-ſcribes attachment without caprice, de-jection ſtruggling with a ſenſe of pro-priety, and ſimplicity affecting a diſ-guiſe which it cannot ſupport. Such readers will not join in the reflections of lady Monteith, who, reviewing, du-ring her ſolitary walk home, her friend's behaviour, and rightly aſcribing her unwillingneſs to accompany her to a fear of being led to diſcuſs a ſubject to which ſhe was unequal, exclaimed, "Dear, artleſs, amiable girl! Where "ſhall I find another Lucy?"

Early the next morning the Mon-teiths ſet off for London. At parting with his daughter, ſir William diſco-vered the deep yet firm regret of diſin-

terested affection. "I shall miss you "very much, my dear love," said he; "but it is for your good, so I shall not "complain. I must look for amuse-"ment to your letters now, instead of "your pretty prattle. Don't be cast "down, child; for I shall not be dull "if you are happy." The tender Geraldine could only answer with her tears.

At this instant Mr. Evans, who had been from home the preceding morning, interrupted the family party by his characteristic adieus. "I trust, my dear "lady, you are going to make many "hearts happy; you will leave many "aching ones behind you here." Then turning to lord Monteith, whose bosom glowed with sentiments which Nature meant he should have been better acquainted with, "Providence," said the good man with patriarchal simplicity, "has

" has intrufted you, my lord, with a
" rich jewel. Wear it at your heart."

" That I will," replied the young earl, fhaking him cordially by the hand; " and for the fhare you had in giving " it to me, remember, when I am " prime minifter, you fhall be arch- " bifhop of Canterbury." A fudden glow of pleafure brightened the general dejection. Sir William, enjoying the tribute to his daughter's worth, thus haftily extorted from her lord, more than he would have done a ftudied compliment, tenderly preffed his fon-in-law's hand, and led his drooping daughter to the chariot. The carriages drove off. London, and its round of pleafures, foon regained poffeffion of his lordfhip's mind, unaccuftomed to the finer emotions; while his lady's eyes oft turned to take another view of Powerfcourt. " Farewell," faid fhe to herfelf, " ye dear fcenes of my youth-

 " ful

"ful pleaſures. Farewell to the home
"and the protection of the beſt of fa-
"thers! I enter upon an untried, and,
"if I may truſt to the experience of
"others, a perplexing world. Will
"the huſband of my choice, the future
"maſter of my deſtiny, treat me with
"ſuch uniform tenderneſs as my in-
"dulgent parent did? Will he guide
"my inexperienced ſteps, like my dear
"Mrs. Evans? or, may I unboſom to
"him my inmoſt ſoul, as I did to my
"ſympathiſing Lucy? Ah! could I
"but be ſure that I ſhall return in a
"few months ſatisfied with my own
"lot, find my dear father unchanged
"in health and ſpirits, Mrs. Evans
"well, and my Lucy happy!" A tear
obſcured her radiant eyes, when my
lord rouſed her from her reverie, by
telling her the number of miles they
were from London.

CHAP. XV.

Come then, the colours and the ground prepare!
Dip in the rainbow, trick her off in air,
Choose a firm cloud before it fall, and in it
Catch, ere she glance, the Cynthia of the minute.
POPE.

ON the close of the first day's journey, lady Monteith accidentally inquired how far they were from Oxford. "Admira-" bly recollected!" cried his lordship; "I have always intended to go there, "and never could find time. We will "take it in our way to London."

"Don't you recollect," said the countess, "that by the last accounts "from Scotland our friends intend to be "in town before the end of this week?"

"O! we shall run all over Oxford "in a day or two. Beside, suppose "they

" they do get to Portland-place before
" us, my houfekeeper is the civileft,
" beft-bred creature you ever faw, infi-
" nitely fuperior to the myrmidons near
" Kinloch-caftle. She will make them
" very fine courtefies, and they will
" glide about and get over their firft
" wonder before we reach town."

" But will that be perfectly refpect-
" ful and accommodating?"

" My dear Geraldine, if you take
" fo much pains to accommodate other
" people, they will foon give you a
" furfeit of courtefy. My good aunt
" in particular; fhe has had her own
" way years enough; and for fear fhe
" fhould take up any idea of managing
" me, I fhall fhew her at firft that I
" mean to pleafe myfelf, and never care
" what fhe or the world think about
" it."

The

The excurſion to Oxford being now as irrevocably fixed as the ancient laws of the Medes and Perſians, lady Monteith privately diſpatched her own ſervant to town with the beſt apology her invention could frame to her expected gueſts.

On entering the ſeat of the Muſes,

——Mother of arts
" And eloquence, native to famous wits,
" Or hoſpitable, in her ſweet receſs,
" City or ſuburban, ſtudious walks and ſhades;"

the counteſs felt a refined pleaſure, uninterrupted by any painful recollections, till her lord, as he hurried her from the Theatre to the Ratcliffe Library, ſuddenly exclaimed, " Have you not ſome " curioſity of your own to exhibit at " Oxford,—a quondam lover? How you " bluſh, you little tyrant! I muſt ſee " him.—I once intended to cut the " fellow's throat; but I am quite in " charity with him now. Where is " he?

" he? we will have him with us at the
" hotel this evening."

" Indeed, my lord," ſtammered lady Monteith, " I am afraid he cannot
" come. He is very ill."

" Ill!—O! then we will go and ſee
" him. What college does he belong
" to?—Come, we can go to his rooms
" firſt."

" Not without ſome previous no-
" tice," ſaid the counteſs. " His
" complaint is on his ſpirits, and we
" ſhall only agitate him. It is a low
" fever."

" A low fever!" replied his lordſhip with a loud laugh. " A ſtrong love-fit
" you mean. You ſpirited him off
" very cleverly, Geraldine, and juſt in
" time to ſave his life; for I had writ-
" ten a challenge for him. I wonder,
" by the bye, why you came to refuſe
" him; for he muſt be one of your
" own

"own accommodating ſort of people,
"to give up a charming girl to a ſtran-
"ger, and afterwards fall ſick about
"her himſelf. We will have him;
"the ſight of you, and a bottle or two
"of claret, will cure his low fever."

"You are all in the wrong," replied lady Monteith, who could ſcarcely ſummon ſufficient ſpirits to parry this attack; "but all your manœuvres ſhall
"not make me gratify your curioſity
"by explaining this enigma. I will
"write to Henry, and aſk him to give
"us the meeting; but pray, remember, that he really is unwell, and alſo
"naturally timid and reſerved. Spare
"your raillery therefore; for, though
"you will be wide of the mark, his
"ſenſibility is ſo acute, that it may
"give him pain."

Lord Monteith, with truth, declared that he never deſigned to give any one

 uneaſineſs.

uneasiness. On returning to the inn her ladyship dispatched the following letter:

" To HENRY POWERSCOURT, Esq.

" It is impossible to pass through " Oxford without feeling a solicitude " for the health of my valuable friend; " and if it be sufficiently restored to " bear the exertion, your company this " evening would afford me peculiar " pleasure. Lord Monteith joins anxi- " ously in this wish. His impatience " to be introduced to one, on whose " merits he has often heard my father " expatiate, would have carried him to " your apartments; but I doubted how " far you might be able to bear his " visit. Come to us, my dear Henry, " if you possibly can; perhaps my " lord's playful vivacity may enliven " you. To see you well and happy is " the

" the only addition now wanting to the
" felicity of

" Your ever-faithful
" and grateful friend,
" GERALDINE MONTEITH."

The servant who carried this epistle returned with the intelligence that the gentleman had been very ill, and was gone for change of air to some friend's house a few miles in the country; but that his servant happened to come to his lodgings to inquire for messages just as he was there; and that he had given him the letter to carry to his master. " How far was his friend's house from " Oxford?" The servant could not tell. " Did he know the name of the gen- " tleman at whose house he was?" No. " Nor the name of the place?" Still a negative—" Blockhead!"—but I shall omit the epithets by which my lord

expreſſed his ſenſe of diſappointment; for though they conveyed to his terrified lady the idea of his being in a towering paſſion, habit made them paſs trippingly from his tongue without any conſciouſneſs of having uttered them. While lady Monteith therefore, pale and trembling, reflected upon the uniform ſuavity of her father's manners, a turn or two acroſs the room ſet the earl perfectly to rights again, who, advancing to her with a ſmile which perfectly became him, begged the favour of her, as he had loſt the diverſion of quizzing a chum, to amuſe him with a game at piquet.

No other incident worth recording occurred during the remainder of their journey to London. On their arrival at their town reſidence, a number of ſervants ranged themſelves on each ſide the entrance to welcome their approach.

Though

Though Monteith had not beſtowed much trouble in ſacrificing to the Graces, he poſſeſſed all the natural elegance of a Belvidere Apollo. He preſented their new miſtreſs with a look of benevolent freedom, which his features were particularly calculated to expreſs; and he told them, that ſhe was come to make them all as happy and as good as herſelf. The counteſs's heart felt agreeably elated. She caſt a benignant glance around, and advancing to the houſekeeper, who ſtood at the head of the female party, after an aſſurance of general good-will to all, ſhe preſſed her hand with that graceful affability which was concomitant to all her actions; when the words "Lady Madelina" inſtantly changed the ſcene.

Her ladyſhip was indeed advancing *in propria perſona*, bridling with ſtiff dignity, rendered yet more ſtubborn by a ſmo-

a ſmothered ſenſe of affront. She congratulated her nephew in terms ſolemnly ſententious, and then bent her knees to the bride with the overſtrained lowlineſs of proud humility. Monteith, though he knew his aunt's character, felt thunderſtruck; and the timidity which her ladyſhip's dreſs, figure, and manner excited, annihilated all the poliſhed elegance of Geraldine. The parties, therefore, ſtood like what the ſportſmen call hounds at a fault, till lady Madelina waved her hand for her niece to go up ſtairs firſt; which the latter declining, the former wheeled round, and, in the ſame conſequential manner, reaſcended to the drawing-room. Lord Monteith, as he followed in the proceſſion, muttered to himſelf, "No! "this will never do."

The ceremony of being properly fixed in their chairs took up ſome minutes; and

and after three introductory hems, Geraldine ventured to try the ſound of her own voice by expreſſing her regret that they were not in town at the time of lady Madelina's arrival; the only anſwer to which apology was a majeſtic bend. Again the young counteſs made an effort at converſation, by hoping that her ladyſhip's health had not ſuffered from the fatigue of her long journey; another bend, and a negative, was the anſwer. "Silence again reigned unrivalled queen," till her empire was terminated by the entrance of her ſworn enemy lady Arabella, who, having given the finiſhing arrangement to her dreſs, ſwam into the room to eclipſe her new ſiſter in thoſe qualities of wit and beauty for which ſhe had heard ſhe was diſtinguiſhed; and certainly, if feature alone could denominate the latter, and volubility the former, the

fair Geraldine muſt have hid her diminiſhed ſplendour.

Nature, who had beſtowed upon the earl of Monteith the ſtriking advantages of a fine figure and an agreeable countenance, had been ſtill more bountiful to his ſiſter, whoſe face and perſon had all the regular lovelineſs which the vaineſt mother could ever deſire for a darling daughter. Theſe ſuperior attractions appeared in her earlieſt years; and as the ſyſtem of policy purſued by the houſe of Macdonald did not add any lucrative temptations to the charms of their females, this rare bounty of nature was treaſured with the moſt unremitting care, as a ſure means of ſecuring an honourable eſtabliſhment. The plan of her education conſiſted in avoiding whatever was bad for the eyes, bad for the ſhape, and bad for the complexion; and in acquiring whatever was per-

perfectly elegant and ſuitable for a young lady of the firſt faſhion.

I have already mentioned the mournful incidents which in her ſeventeenth year baniſhed the lovely Arabella from London, and confined her within the ſecluded walls of Kinloch. The ſame event put a ſtop to her improvements and her pleaſures. The confined education of her preſent protectreſs, lady Madelina, had not even paced the narrow circle of female accompliſhments; and her obſervations had been wholly limited to the neighbourhood where her local pre-eminence allowed her to reign undiſputed ſovereign. No wonder, therefore, that ſhe conceived her niece to be a miracle of erudition, becauſe ſhe could ſpeak French with tolerable volubility; or that her jejune performances in muſic and painting ſhould meet with unbounded celebrity among the viſitants

at

at the caſtle, where few underſtood, and none dared to cenſure. But, excluſive of the pleaſure which even groſs adulation beſtowed, the three years which ſhe ſpent in Scotland formed one continued period of mortification and regret.

Lady Madelina's recollection of thoſe early difficulties which had at laſt influenced her to reward ſir Simon's long and generous attachment, determined her to reſcue her niece from ſimilar trials by adopting her for her heireſs to thoſe ample poſſeſſions which her uxorious huſband had alienated from his own family. But upon becoming perſonally acquainted with her, and finding that all the beauty and all the virtues of the race from old Donald to the preſent times were centered in the peerleſs Arabella, ſhe grew paſſionately fond of her, or rather blindly partial to what

what ſhe fancied the ſummit of all human excellence. To baniſh her chagrin, and to awaken reciprocal attachment, ſhe treated her with unbounded indulgence; but as indulgence always defeats its aim, it neither made the young lady grateful nor happy. On the contrary, ſhe grew every day more capricious, vain, and wretched. She could not love or reſpect a perſon who neither checked her faults nor ſtrengthened her virtues. She ſoon learned the art of turning her aunt's weakneſs to her own advantage, and conſidered the favours ſhe received as a tribute rather than an obligation. Without one ſenſible friend to enlighten her judgment, without one correct model by which to form her character, ſhe miſtook affectation, elegance, and faſtidiouſneſs, for delicacy.

Nor did her diſlike of retirement proceed from a reliſh for poliſhed ſociety, and

and refined pleafures. She only thought that the power of her charms was limited to too narrow a fphere; and fhe wifhed, like the fair Phaëton of the laft age, to "obtain the chariot for a day," that "fhe might fet the world on fire."

Though an invitation to London had at firft infpired a heartfelt complacency for her new fifter, her reported graces had foon obliterated that idea, and ingrafted in its ftead the baneful germ of envy. Had the lovely Geraldine entertained fimilar ideas, their firft interview might rather have been called the battle of the beauties, than an attempt to conciliate fifterly affection and reciprocal regard.

Proteus, the poets tell us, could affume a thoufand refemblances; but, whether he feemed a lion or a fawn, he was Proteus ftill. Like him, lady Arabella could tack an infinitude

of

of modes on her natural habit; but, whether it was the manner of the dove or the magpie, ſhe was ſtill at heart the vain, cold, ſelfiſh Arabella. After a long conſultation ſhe had determined, that the brilliant would be beſt ſuited to her intention of intimidating her rival; and having arranged her dreſs in a manner better adapted to the magnificence of a court-ball than to the caſe of a private party, ſhe burſt upon her aſtoniſhed ſiſter-in-law, who in vain attempted to trace a remote reſemblance of that artleſs wild ſimplicity which her creative imagination had aſſigned to the unknown "Highland laſſie."

The introductory compliments were now diſpatched in a manner diametrically the reverſe of the dry reſerve of the former converſation. Lady Arabella was in ecſtaſy. The careleſs ſimplicity of the bride's travelling habit could not pretend

pretend to any competition with her own profufion of ornament; and both the beauty and the vivacity of Geraldine fuffered from the chagrin which the manners of her vifitors infpired. Confcious fuperiority always fpeaks in hyperbole. Arabella had been immenfely tired with her journey, was rapturoufly delighted with her new relation, and infinitely folicitous that they might foon become the ftricteft of friends.

While fhe fpoke, her eye reverted to every object, except the fubject of her enthufiaftic admiration. Her aunt viewed her with a complacency which the countefs thought her features could not poffibly have affumed, but which was fometimes interrupted by obferving what effect this fparkling converfation had upon the Monteiths; for, though it could not poffibly anfwer any end, lady Madelina

Madelina would have felt mortified if even her nephew did not acknowledge how infinitely his fifter excelled his wife. Her obfervations that evening were limited to a fhort period: his lordfhip had bufinefs to tranfact with his banker, which could not poffibly be delayed; and he foon left them, whifpering his lady, "Go to bed if you are tired of "them."

Geraldine did not conceive herfelf warranted to follow her lord's advice. She made fome attempts to gain a fhare in the converfation; but the playful wit and eafy fweetnefs which at Powerfcourt "engroffed all hearts and charmed all eyes," had now loft all its power, and fhe funk quietly into the lefs brilliant but ufeful character of a hearer; while her guefts enumerated the old titles which might be revived in the houfe of Macdonald, and fettled the

the exact place in which the reprefentative of their honours ought to walk at the next coronation.

They feparated at an early hour. The young countefs did not find herfelf difpofed to fleep, unaccuftomed as fhe had been to contempt and to unkindnefs. Powerfcourt and the friends of her youth rufhed full upon her mind. "What," faid fhe to herfelf, "am I to "expect from ftrangers, when thofe "with whom I have juft contracted the "tie of kindred are even ftudious to "fhew their diflike of me?" To this reflection followed a fear, that her lord would leave her, unprotected, to their pride and folly; and the bitter tears which fhe had hitherto reftrained courfed each other down her cheek.

At that inftant lord Monteith entered. He had met with a party of his old friends, who would felicitate him upon

his

his nuptials, and he was returned home in a very joyous humour. "I was "very sorry to leave you, my dearest "Geraldine," said he; "I know it was "rude and aukward to go out the first "evening after you came home; but "it was not in the power of man to "endure my consequential aunt, or the "ridiculous automaton that Arabella has "become. Did they get a little more "tolerable after I left them? Ha! you "are in tears—I swear by heaven, that "if they have given you the least "cause for uneasiness, they shall both "leave my house to-morrow morning."

Lady Monteith knew enough of the earl's temper to be convinced that this threat would be fulfilled. Her prudence not only determined her instantly to avert from herself the dreadful imputation of violating the harmony of the family into which she was adopted, but it

 made

made her alſo reſolve to aſſume the amiable character of a mediatrix if any contentions ſhould in future ariſe. Happy in the hope that ſhe ſhould ever preſerve her avowed pre-eminence in her lord's affections, her ſorrows ſeemed to diſſipate like a morning miſt, and ſhe anſwered with a ſmile, that ſhe had been wicked enough to be entertained with the eccentricities of the ſtrangers, which doubtleſs proceeded from too recluſe a mode of life, and would certainly be worn off by a little commerce with the world. "I have," continued ſhe, "enough "to condemn myſelf for;—I have been "a petted child, and, feeling your ab-"ſence this evening more than I ought, "Powerſcourt returned to my memory. "But do not reprove me. My heart, "Monteith, is formed for ſtrong attach-"ments. I have preferred you to my "father's houſe and my early friends;

"yet

" yet muft I ever 'remember that fuch
" things were,' and 'that they were moft
" precious.' The young earl gazed at her with the tendereft regard, vowed eternal affection, and for a moment wondered how he came to find out fuch an angel.

But while the amiable Geraldine thus purfued her early defign of fecuring, meliorating, and correcting the heart of her lord, his noble relations were employed in adding a little adventitious fuel to their own native fire. The ftranger was arraigned (but not at the bar of juftice or candour), and found guilty of the following offences, which, as they were fupported by pofitive evidence, could not afterwards be difproved: Firft, fhe muft be nobody, notwithftanding Mrs. Archibald Frazer, of Annale, had affirmed that the Powerfcourts were a good family; for lady Madelina had detected her in the very act

of ſhaking hands with a ſervant; beſide, lady Monteith's terrified manner at firſt ſeeing her, proved that ſhe had never been in company with a lady of quality before. Secondly, ſhe was no beauty; for ſhe was not above the middle ſize, and her complexion no better than a brunette; her features too had nothing of the Rubens' caſt, and were totally diſſimilar to all the firſt-rate toaſts in the picture-gallery at Kinloch. Thirdly, ſhe was no wit; for ſhe never tried at a repartee all the evening, and her expreſ-ſions were as common as thoſe of a houſe-maid. This degraded creature being no longer an object of terror to lady Arabella, ſhe reſolved to try if ſhe could not live upon good terms with her; and lady Madelina obſerved, that as the girl ſeemed good-tempered, and had a large fortune, perhaps her nephew, who was but a thoughtleſs kind of a young man, could not have done much better.

CHAP. XVI.

> Good humour only teaches charms to laſt,
> Still makes new conqueſts, and maintains the paſt;
> Love rais'd on beauty will like that decay,
> Our hearts may bear its ſlender chain a day;
> As flow'ry bands in wantonneſs are worn,
> A morning's pleaſure, and at evening torn;
> This binds in ties more eaſy, yet more ſtrong,
> The willing heart, and only holds it long.
>
> POPE.

THE ceremony of congratulatory cards now commenced. It was followed by viſits from thoſe ladies who wiſhed to form a cloſer intimacy, and by the introduction of the bride and lady Arabella at court. The death of ſir Simon, though now nearly baniſhed by ſubſequent events from the memory of his amiable relic, was ſtill too recent to allow of her joining in theſe ceremonies.

 She

She could, therefore, only hear from lady Arabella, what ſhe would rather have ſeen, that the bride was completely outdone upon every occaſion. The fair narrator's laudable deſign of making her aunt happy tempted her to ſome ſmall exaggerations. The Grecian model of beauty, which the form and face of Geraldine reſembled, was more conſonant to the public taſte than the round viſage, uniform regularity of features, and auburn locks of the northern beauty. The figure of the latter was indeed more conſpicuous; but being leſs correctly moulded by faſhion, it ſeemed to yield in elegance to the poliſhed ſymmetry of the ever-graceful counteſs. The lily and the roſe were rivalled by Arabella's complexion; yet lilies and roſes may be bought at Warren's, which by candle-light look almoſt as well as nature; but what coſmetic can beſtow that "pure and

and eloquent blood" which ſpoke in Geraldine's face, and might almoſt juſtify the opinion of the poet, "that her body thought?"

If from their perſons the obſerver reverted to the dreſs and manners of the ſiſter beauties, the palm indiſputably belonged to the counteſs. In her ſelection of ornament the correctneſs of her taſte led her to reject what was exuberant and ſuperfluous; and by ſtudying ſuitableneſs rather than ſplendor, ſhe ever appeared with the graceful propriety of a woman of faſhion; while lady Arabella was loſt in the maze of taſſels and flounces. The terms upon which ſir William Powerſcourt lived with his neighbours were not calculated to inſpire his daughter's mind with any ideas of inherent ſuperiority, further than what her own merit juſtified. His family pride was not of a hoſtile character.

racter. It rather taught him to refpect himfelf, than to defpife others. Educated in the fpirit of benevolence and univerfal good-will, if any indications of latent vanity fometimes appeared to check the nobler growth of Geraldine's foul, Mrs. Evans was ever at hand to eradicate the pernicious weed. The internal principle thus fecured, her native good fenfe and obfervation taught her to copy the exterior of politenefs from the beft models which her fituation afforded; and on her entrance into the firft circles, fhe only appeared to want a little familiarity with peculiar cuftoms, to realize in its fulleft perfection the character of a well-bred woman.

On the contrary, lady Arabella's conftant attempts to fhine announced the effort, and miffed the effect. Hauteur could not command refpect from thofe who, equal or fuperior in rank, allowed

allowed nothing to the claims of a longer pedigree. Confeffedly inferior to moft young ladies of her own ftation in acquired graces, the mere attraction of beauty, though foon felt, was as foon forgotten. The flippant obfervation and fevere farcafm, which at Kinloch-caftle paffed for eloquence and wit, could not endure the teft of more competent judges, who cannot relifh a fneer unlefs recommended by fome other quality than mere malignity. When to thefe confiderations is added the reflection, that the world is generally more inclined to approve thofe who folicit their favour than thofe who command their attention, it will not be wondered at, that general opinion loudly proclaimed lady Monteith a very charming woman; and that if ever the filence of polite referve was interrupted by repeated inquiries of "What do you think of lady Arabella

 "Mac-

"Macdonald?" the moſt candid anſwer generally received was, "Nothing very "ſtriking."

The Philoſopher who attempts to deſcribe the ſecret powers of nature will not expect to trace the footſteps of the ſovereign Queen "in crowded cities" or "the buſy haunts of men," but in the ſequeſtered glen or uncultivated mountain. The Moraliſt who, by a deſcription of the human character, wiſhes to correct the failings of the human heart, will not place his ſphere of obſervation in thoſe ſcenes where faſhion preſcribes a genteel uniformity of manners. The crowded rout, where every body is well-bred; the drawing-room, where every body is well dreſſed; the public breakfaſt, where every body is lively; and the opera, where every body is in ecſtacies, may prove an author's intimacy with the great world; but, however

however the reader may be dazzled by the glare of finery, the mind commonly complains of meagre entertainment. A few general obſervations will ſuffice to deſcribe the firſt month of lady Monteith's acquaintance with faſhionable life. She trod the giddy maze of diſſipation with firm but graceful ſtep. The voice of flattery, though ſoothing to her ear, excited no dangerous emotion. Her character retained its primitive virtues, her heart remained faithful to the impreſſion which was now conſecrated by indelible ties, and her judgment continued to prefer the mild luſtre of connubial happineſs to all the glare of faſhion, and all the faſcination of pleaſure.

The earl of Monteith ſtill continued to think his Geraldine the moſt perfect of all human beings, and himſelf the moſt fortunate man in the world. It

was impoſſible for him to think otherwiſe; for all his young friends declared him a happy fellow, and his courtly acquaintance pronounced his lady to be the moſt divine creature ever ſeen. It was aſtoniſhing, they ſaid, how ſhe could acquire ſuch an air of high ton in her ſecluded ſituation; and ſtill more wonderful, that the reſplendent fame of the fair recluſe had not pervaded the rural ſhades by which ſhe was ſurrounded. "Your taſte in beauty, my lord," they added, "is perfectly accurate, and "the world is infinitely obliged to you "for introducing this paragon to its "adoration."

His lordſhip always went home in raptures from ſuch converſation; but his lady was either gone out with a party, or the preſence of his noble relations qualified his tranſports, and convinced him that one angel cannot protect

tect the joys of the domestic paradise, if spirits malign over-leap the sacred inclosure. The hours intended to be devoted to the endearing charities of private life were most commonly usurped by high dispute and sour contradiction, to which the softening observations of the countess could not always give the air of sportive raillery. Lady Arabella's positive refusal to attend a public breakfast given by one of her brother's greatest intimates, and to which he had thoughtlessly engaged his female inmates without previously consulting lady Madelina, disconcerted the earl so much, that he determined even to give up the pleasures of London, and to betake himself to the wild shores of Loch Lomond, rather than continue where he could not be master of his own actions. To his loud complaints against feminine perverseness, his lady vainly attempted to oppose her observ-

obſervation, that though lady Arabella's refuſal to go had rather an air of pertinacity, it merely reſtricted her own conduct, and could by no means be conſtrued into an attempt to control his perfect liberty. The truth was, lord Monteith was as deſirous of governing as his ſiſter was unwilling to obey; and his querulous hatred of reſtriction led him to ſcrutinize every word, look, and action, which ſeemed to militate againſt the wiſdom of his deciſions and the freedom of his conduct. Lady Arabella's refuſal to go to the breakfaſt had been aggravated by ſome reflections on the inviter's rudeneſs in not returning her curteſy at Ranelagh; to which lady Madelina added, that a neglect of politeneſs was the true criterion by which a plebeian family might always be diſcove.ed. His lordſhip ſo bitterly reſented this ſarcaſm, that, regardleſs of

the fair fame of the titled Macdonalds now committed to his charge, he resolved to convince the world that peers of the realm may be as unpolite as commoners; and though lady Madelina and her niece talked of removing to a villa near Richmond in about a month, he determined not to endure the temporary thraldom, but immediately to emancipate himſelf from their fetters, by ſetting out for Monteith; and, with the inconſiſtency which frequently marked his character, he appointed the very morning fixed for his friend's public breakfaſt for his own departure.

Lady Monteith's heart, as I have already hinted, was not wedded to the amuſements of London. Her natural taſte and early habits did not teach her to ſtart affrighted at the name of ſolitude, nor did the recollection of mild colloquial pleaſures induce her to regret

the ſociety ſhe was going to leave. On the contrary, had the manner been better ſuited to the project, the propoſal of viſiting her lord's hereditary poſſeſſions would have met her entire approbation. She would have rejoiced in the proſpect of renewing thoſe ties of gratitude and generoſity, which had been long diſſolved; and the hope of reanimating a forlorn deſert region would have afforded equal gratification to her native benevolence and inherent love of diſtinction. But while ſhe recollected her lord's often-repeated preference of London and abhorrence of Scotland, ſhe regretted that pique and diſpleaſure, not duty and conviction, had wrought the deſired change. Ruminating with deep regret on thoſe traits of her huſband's character, of which this incident gave he. a full view, ſhe ſhuddered at the idea of her own miſery if the fatal

period

period ſhould ever arrive when ſhe ſhould loſe her preſent influence over his affections. What was ſhe to expect from paſſions ſo irritable, ſo impatient of control, and from a diſpoſition ſo little influenced by the reſtraints of decorum, or the opinion of the world!

Mrs. Evans's remembered admonition diverted her mind from purſuing this melancholy theme; but, as ſhe traced the chain of her parting precepts, ſhe felt that there was one obſervation with which ſhe never could coincide. Should the event which her fears anticipated ever take place, ſhe knew it would be a misfortune which time could never overcome, a ſorrow which patience never could ſoften.

While the ſweetly-tempered mind of the young counteſs framed extenuating apologies, and concerted a thouſand little acts of attentive kindneſs, to mitigate

tigate the painful effects of her lord's self-willed negligence upon the minds of his friends, she was agreeably surprized to find affairs in the best train possible; and a greater degree of cordiality and good-humour arose from what she suspected must have proved the death-blow to family amity. No sooner had the earl announced his intention of setting out for Scotland, and trying to make his old castle something habitable, than the active imagination of lady Madelina flew back to the times of her grandfather, when Monteith was in its greatest splendor. She again anticipated the sound of the bugle-horn, reverberating round its projecting towers, to summon the clan to attend their feudal chieftain to a hunting party or a curling match. Her mind now recurred to the grandeur of a public day, the court glittering with splendid visitors, the desolated

halls

halls resounding with the cheerful notes of the bagpipe, and numerous servants in gaudy liveries conducting the astonished guests through the long galleries to a magnificent entertainment. Fired at the idea, her countenance lost its usual asperity, and with an air of melting kindness she applauded the wisdom of her nephew's project. "By all "means," said she, "endeavour to re-"store the castle and its vicinity exactly "to the same state in which it was at "the time of your great-grandfather. "Never be seen beyond its walls with-"out a train of archers and broad-"sword-men. Your ancestors would "not even appear at Stirling without "fifty attendants, most of whom were "Macdonalds in the right line. It "struck an awe into the neighbour-"hood; for not one of these gentlemen

"ever

" ever condescended to engage in any " mercantile pursuits, but dined every " day at the laird of Monteith's table. " The country was not then over-run " with upstart traders, who, by intro- " ducing manufactories, as they call " them, corrupt all the common people, " and render them insolent to their su- " periors. I remember, even when I " was a child, that if a coach with the " Macdonald arms quartered upon it did " but pass through Glasgow, all the in- " habitants ran to the door, and testi- " fied their respect by suitable ges- " tures; but now you may traverse " the whole town, and not one loom " shall be stopped to pay you a proper " compliment."

Let not the reader suppose that lady Madelina's harangue was intended to have terminated so abruptly. It might have

have extended to the length of the expostulation of the ghosts in Gray's "Long Story," had not Arabella taken advantage of a cough to rejoice that her dear sister was going to recruit a little in the wholesome air of the Highlands after the fatigues of dissipated London. The pleasure which glowed in her countenance did not, however, in truth, result from her hope that the faded cheek of Geraldine might soon resume its pristine roses. In spite of the contempt which she affected, the absence of a rival who abridged her conquests and humbled her vanity was the real source of Arabella's joy.

Lord Monteith was so delighted to find his plans thus cordially approved, that his resentment immediately softened, and he politely offered his aunt the use of his house in London till she could fix

herself

herſelf in anagreeable reſidence. Her ladyſhip repaid the favour, by promiſing to reſtore all the valuable embelliſhments which ſhe had ſurreptitiouſly conveyed to Kinloch caſtle, as ſoon as Monteith was reinſtated in its priſtine ſplendor.

CHAP. XVII.

I rue the riches of my former fate;
Sweet comfort's blasted clusters I lament:
I tremble at the blessings once so dear.

YOUNG.

THE day preceding that fixed for her departure from London, lady Monteith was painfully surprized by the presence of an unexpected visitor. This was no other than Henry Powerscourt, who, having at last determined to visit Italy, imposed upon himself the severe task of bidding farewell to that treasure, the loss of which had rendered his native country a desart scene, barren of every joy and every hope. Having thus divulged a secret, at which before I only hinted, it still remains necessary to develope the motives that induced this extraordinary lover to refuse the blessing which

which the amiable ſingularities of ſir William Powerſcourt had placed within his reach.

From his earlieſt youth his ſuſceptible mind had felt the full power of his couſin's charms; but while his admiration rendered her raillery more exquiſitely painful, it prompted the ardent yet unacknowledged wiſh to acquire every laudable quality which could recommend him to the favour of the loveliest of her ſex. His inexperienced heart knew not the nature of that paſſion to which it was a victim; if it had, the native rectitude of his mind would have ſtarted with inbred horror at a diſcovery that ſeemed to ſtamp every ungenerous, mean, and ungrateful vice upon the unprincipled villain, who dared to liſt his ſelfiſh eyes to the angelic daughter of his honoured benefactor. So far, therefore, from taking any indirect

direct means to obtain the object of his wishes, those wishes were unperceived even by himself, and he fancied that he cherished no other sentiments than such as could be justified by the ties of friendship and affinity. The general admiration which Geraldine attracted seemed to confirm this idea; and though the inquietude which he ever felt at hearing of her having made any particular conquest might have removed the delusion, he still soothed himself with the persuasion that his anxiety arose only from a friendly solicitude for her welfare, and he forbore to probe the wound till it became too deep to admit of cure.

The terms of the letter in which sir William had summoned him to Powerscourt excited a wild tumult of hopes and fears, and first convinced him that the interest he took in his fair cousin's happiness was not so entirely abstracted

from selfish considerations as he had supposed. A faithful old domestic, who was the bearer of this epistle, could not forbear telling the enraptured youth, that the general report of the family pointed him out as the heir and son-in-law of their respected master. A thousand expressions of sir William's were now recollected in an instant, and Henry's ardent mind explained their equivocal nature as decidedly significant of the generous plan which had been long formed in his favour. His reception elevated these hopes into certainties; for, though sir William forbore any particular explanation, the uncommon kindness of his manner, and some injunctions to Henry to do such and such things after he was gone, banished every remaining doubt of his intentions.

Nor did Miss Powerscourt's unusual dejection alarm her lover with the apprehension

prehenſion that her ſentiments were not in uniſon with her father's. He thought that a reflecting mind muſt feel a temporary depreſſion during the period of a deciſion ſo momentous to its future welfare. Yet while he regretted the abſence of that charming vivacity which he alike dreaded and admired, and anxiouſly wiſhed that ſir William's expected declaration would releaſe him from that ſilence which his delicacy preſcribed, and leave him at liberty to reaſſure his miſtreſs's virgin heart by proteſtations of fervent gratitude and unalterable love, he thought even Geraldine herſelf never appeared ſo lovely with all her enchanting graces ſporting around her, as ſhe did in her preſent intereſting melancholy.

This golden dream ſoon terminated. On the fourth morning after his arrival at Powerſcourt, Henry ſurpriſed Ge-

raldine in an agony of grief too violent to be referred to any other caufe than extreme and hopelefs forrow. The folicitude of generous love was inftantly awakened, and he entreated her confidence in terms ftrongly indicative of affectionate fympathy. "If," faid the lovely mourner, fixing her radiant eyes upon him with a firm but defpairing look; "if you are indeed the noble dif-
"interefted Henry I have ever fuppofed
"you, I may yet be happy; if not,
"I am a wretch for life. This is not
"a time for difguife and affectation.
"My father intends that you fhould be
"my hufband; but though I efteem
"your virtues, my heart avows a pre-
"ference for another, which I never
"can furmount. Nothing but mifery
"can refult from our union. Be ge-
"nerous Henry; and, by refufing me,
"prevent a difclofure which would be

 "deftructive

" deſtructive to my father's peace, and
" to which nothing but deſpair ſhall
" ever drive me."

As all language would be inadequate to deſcribe the feelings of Mr. Powerſcourt, I ſhall only ſay, that he ſilently dropped the fair hand which he had ardently graſped at his entrance, and, after a minute's pauſe, ſtammered out a few words expreſſive of his reſolution to comply with her requeſt. He then haſtened to the door. " Stay," ſaid Geraldine, whoſe heart, relieved from the burden of her own ſorrows, inſtantly felt for him to whom ſhe appeared to have transferred the inſupportable load; " Stay, and hear the
" effuſions of gratitude, eſteem, friend-
" ſhip"——" No," ſaid the tortured youth, breaking from her, " if I ſtay
" another moment, I never can reſign
" you."

His ſubſequent conduct has been already deſcribed, and the myſtery of lady Monteith's requiring two thouſand pounds a-year to be left at her ſole diſpoſal will be explained, by obſerving that ſhe thought even that ſplendid donative would be inadequate as a proof of her eſteem for a man who had evidently ſacrificed his own happineſs to her's: Her affectionate wiſhes pointed to Lucy Evans as his beſt and moſt ſuitable reward.

Sir William's reſentment at Mr. Powerſcourt's ſuppoſed indifference to his daughter's merits had ſoon ſubſided, and a little after the departure of the Monteiths he ſent him a friendly invitation to come and ſee him, with an aſſurance that he was ready to ſerve him in whatever way he thought proper to point out. Henry determined upon this viſit, with the expectation that his melancholy

lancholy would be relieved by frequenting the ſcenes in which he had nurſed his infant paſſion, and that the converſation of his reſpected benefactor would ſooth his ſaddened ſpirits. The air of dejection and indiſpoſition which was ſpread over his countenance excited the kind attention of his benevolent kinſman. He took him all the walks and rides he uſed to take with Geraldine, and, by way of diverting him, conſtantly dwelt upon a theme which he thought muſt be pleaſing, the affection of lord Monteith, and his daughter's happineſs. "It is very ſtrange," ſir William ſometimes ſaid to himſelf, "that "Henry refuſed Geraldine, and yet he "don't like to hear of her being happy "with her huſband; and after all, they "never uſed to fall out; and Henry is "a very good young man, with nothing "of envy or malice in his diſpoſition."

He ſaw but little of the family at the rectory. Mrs. Evans declined rapidly; her huſband ſeemed to need all the conſolations of ſtrong ſenſe and chriſtian fortitude to ſupport the ſhock, and the gentle Lucy ſunk, like a broken lily under the beating of "the pitileſs ſtorm." She ſeemed ſtudiouſly to ſhun converſing with Mr. Powerſcourt; and when an interview was unavoidable, ſhe was not only dejected but reſerved. As he once attempted to recall to her remembrance the joyous ſcenes of juvenile amuſement, when the manor-houſe and the parſonage ſeemed alternately the temple of innocent cheerfulneſs, ſhe turned ſuddenly, and, gazing at him with a penetrating ſmile, obſerved, "that "the temples remained, but they had "loſt the goddeſs who irradiated the "ſcene"

Diſap-

Disappointed in his expectations of finding consolation in those objects which used to administer delight, Henry at last answered sir William's inquiries of what he could do to serve him, by remarking, that he thought the salubrious climate of Italy might be of service to his health, and that the numerous objects which it presented to the curious eye might dissipate the languor which indisposition excited. Though sir William was convinced that England, particularly Caernarvonshire, was the most healthful climate in the world, and contained a sufficient number of wonders to entertain any rational man, yet he thought that the whimsies of sick people should be treated with the same indulgence as their palled appetites. His assent was accompanied by a liberal allowance; but he charged him to stop in London, and, if lord Monteith and Ge-

raldine had not left it, to make their houſe his home for a few weeks. "The "company of your couſin," ſaid he, "will do you good; and my lord is "ſtill livelier than ſhe is. Beſide, you "may have an opportunity of getting "the beſt medical advice the kingdom "affords; and, I charge you, don't be "guided by outlandiſh phyſicians while "you are abroad, for they never can "underſtand what is proper for an "Engliſh conſtitution. I have no "doubt, Henry, that your good ſenſe "will keep you from running wild, as "many of our young fly-about travel-"lers do; and I dare ſay you will not "diſgrace my regard for you, by pre-"tending, when you come back again, "to like other countries better than "your own."

No phyſician at that time reſiding in London who "could miniſter to a

mind diſeaſed," or who could "pluck from the memory a rooted ſorrow," Mr. Powerſcourt did not apply for medical aſſiſtance; and he regretted that the eſtabliſhed laws of ſociety compelled him either to viſit the fair troubler of his peace before he left England, or, by attempting excuſes to which his ingenuous nature was unequal, excite ſuſpicions of a ſecret which he flattered himſelf was confined to his own boſom. He called at Portland-place at an unſeaſonable hour, and without previouſly announcing his intentions. He was, however, admitted, contrary to his hopes, and found himſelf in the counteſs's dreſſing-room before he had acquired ſufficient fortitude to ſupport the trying interview. He advanced with timid ſteps, reſigned her offered hand with reſpectful coldneſs, and, glancing his eyes over the

happy envied Monteith, took a chair, and attempted a perplexed converſation.

His lordſhip immediately found that his intended raillery had loſt all its enticing piquancy. The dejection, embarraſſment, and evident indiſpoſition of his rival affected his good nature, and he ſtrove by repeated attentions to diſſipate his confuſion. But as it rather increaſed than diminiſhed, his lordſhip recollected that his behaviour might have an air of inſult; and, after two or three attempts to occupy his own mind by reading the charades written on a fire-ſcreen, he at laſt conſidered, that the moſt conciliating conduct he could adopt would be to take himſelf out of the room, which, after deſiring Henry to ſpend the day with them, he immediately did, with too much precipitation to hear his reply.

Lady

Lady Monteith was by this time sufficiently recovered from the perturbation which native delicacy and innate benevolence had excited, to inquire after her father's looks and spirits. She heard with delight that he seemed perfectly well. " And," added Henry, " I have the unspeakable pleasure to say, " that, thanks to your generous media-" tion! I seem completely restored to " his favour."

" Do not talk of my generosity, Hen-" ry, for fear I should enter upon a " never-ending theme—But our friends " at the rectory—Can you tell me any " good news of them?"

" Mrs. Evans declines rapidly—she " cannot continue long."

" O, my dearest Lucy," said the countess, bursting into tears, " excellent, forlorn girl! who will comfort " you!"

" Can

" Can thofe be forlorn whom you
" love ?" replied Henry. " Your friend-
" fhip, Geraldine, is a bleffing which
" muft compenfate for every other lofs."
" You forget that my prefent fitua-
" tion impofes duties upon me which
" no longer leave me at liberty to fly
" to that dear girl to comfort her filial
" forrow. Does fhe feem fenfible of
" her approaching calamity ?"
" I do not know; I faw very little of
" her. Can you tell me, lady Mon-
" teith, why I have been fo unfortunate
" as to lofe Mifs Evans's confidence ?"
" You cannot have loft it; I know
" her fentiments too well; fhe regards
" you with all the efteem your merit
" deferves."
" I thought myfelf a blank in the crea-
" tion, banifhed from the good opinion
" of every one except your excellent
" father."

" Indeed,

" Indeed, Henry, you muſt caſt aſide " this miſanthropic humour. It robs " you of all the amiable candour na- " tural to your character."

" I truſt, lady Monteith, I ſhall find " it the diſeaſe of the climate. In " eight-and-forty hours I hope to bid a " long farewel to England, to all my " ſorrows, and—" he juſt recollected himſelf in time to forbear adding, " and " to you."

" Let me not," ſaid the counteſs in evident emotion, " engroſs any more " of your time, which muſt be fully " occupied with preparations for your " journey. We ſhall, I truſt, meet " on your return, with the reciprocal " pleaſure our early interviews afforded. " Permit me to addreſs to you thoſe " ſentiments in writing which I find " it impoſſible to utter in converſa- " tion."

He

He replied, " Your letters, madam, " will be invaluable." Finding his refolution unequal to the tafk of further converfation, he prefented his addrefs, bowed, and withdrew.

As Henry Powerfcourt will not for fome time appear again upon the fcene, I fhall fubjoin lady Monteith's firft epiftle to him, with his anfwer. They occafionally correfponded during his refidence abroad; but the remainder of his letters were irrelevant to the fubject of this hiftory.

" To HENRY POWERSCOURT, Efq.

" Do not accufe me of departing " from the delicacy of my fex, if the " warm intereft which your welfare " and happinefs excite induces me to " adopt a freedom in my expreffions " which our near affinity and long " friendfhip alone can juftify. Far from " feeling

" feeling the cruel pride of conqueſt,
" my heart participates in your dejec-
" tion ſo ſtrongly, that while I fancy
" myſelf the cauſe of your unhappineſs,
" I think it is ſelfiſh in me to enjoy
" that cup of bleſſing which would
" otherwiſe be my portion.

" I have reconſidered my conduct
" from my girliſh days. Youthful le-
" vity may have led me into indiſcre-
" tions; but my conſcience acquits me
" of the baſe coquetry of endeavouring
" to excite hopes which I never meant
" to confirm. Let the friend whom I
" ſhall ever eſteem, after a retroſpect
" of his own conduct, declare what
" part of his behaviour expreſſed ſenti-
" ments too lively to be applicable to
" the affection of a relation, and the
" intimacy of a companion. If I rightly
" appreciate the purity of his principles,
" he would have rejected with abhor-
" rence

"rence every deſign of forming a con-
"nection unſanctioned by my father's
"approbation, and the knowledge of
"that approbation was not communi-
"cated till my heart had loſt the power
"of being juſt to the merits of the man
"he propoſed.

"When I appealed to your genero-
"ſity, I knew not how painful a ſacri-
"fice I required. The more I feel it,
"the more I venerate your character;
"while my knowledge of your firm
"ſelf-denying fortitude encourages the
"hope that it will be finally exerted
"for the reſtoration of your own peace
"of mind; that time and abſence will
"prevent your exalted ſpirit from bend-
"ing under an unavoidable diſappoint-
"ment; and that your affections will
"at laſt be juſt to the merits of ſome
"amiable woman, who, with virtues
"ſuperior to what I could ever boaſt,
"will

"will blefs you with the undifputed "preference which, much as I efteem "your merit, I never could beftow. "England, my dear Henry, contains "many fair patterns of feminine worth; "but I will not point out that excel-"lence which your judgment will beft "difcover. Let it fuffice for me to fay, "that, as my happinefs muft be in-"complete while corroded by the for-"rows of thofe whom I tenderly love, "prudential confiderations need not "circumfcribe your choice. I owe you "a debt of gratitude, which a pecuni-"ary recompence, however liberal, can "never repay. Let me hear frequently "from you, and let me hope that the "reafons will foon ceafe which banifh "you from the fight of

"GERALDINE MONTEITH."

"To

" To the Countefs of MONTEITH.

" I confide in your honour for the
" concealment of a paffion which I truft
" your difcernment has alone difcover-
" ed. No blame attaches to the con-
" duct of the moft amiable of women.
" The audacious, but inexperienced
" youth, who prefumed to admire the
" moft attractive pattern of female love-
" linefs he ever beheld, deferves to fuf-
" fer for the prefumptuous hopes which
" a father's preference firft tempted him
" to encourage.

" Anxious to avoid giving pain to
" that heart which I earneftly pray may
" long continue the peaceful feat of
" connubial happinefs, I will endea-
" vour to exert the firmnefs you re-
" commend. I will pay a ftrict regard
" to my health, and court amufement
" in

"in every juſtifiable form. Should I
"fail in my efforts to regain my peace
"of mind, let not the rectitude of
"your principles ſtart at the idea of
"inſpiring an unwarrantable ſentiment
"in my breaſt. An innocent attach-
"ment ſhall never degenerate into a
"guilty paſſion. I remember that you
"are now the wife of the earl of Mon-
"teith: I remember that I withdrew
"my pretenſions in deference to his
"juſter claim. Eternal infamy light
"upon the wretch who ſeeks to diſſolve
"a bond ſanctioned by every law hu-
"man and divine! Eternal infamy light
"upon him who, under the pretence
"of pure ſentimental attachment, ſeeks
"to excite an undue intereſt in a ma-
"tron's heart! I will never return to
"England till I can ſee you without
"emotion in that character; and this

" is the laſt letter which ſhall expreſs a
" thought inconſiſtent with the equa-
" nimity of an affectionate relation and
" a ſincere friend.

" HENRY POWERSCOURT."

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.